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MEMOIRS

OF

THE WHIG PARTY

DURING MY TIME.

BY

HENRY RICHARD LORD HOLLAND.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

HENRY EDWARD LORD HOLLAND.

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BOOK THE THIRD.

RELATING TO THE EVENTS OF 1806 AND PART OF 1807.

Written originally between the years 1812 and 1816; and now transcribed and revised from the second green morocco book in 1824.

VASSALL HOLLAND.

N. B.—I have divided the contents of the second green morocco book into two books: originally they formed one only. This *Third* Book now ends with the passing the Abolition Act in 1807; and the account of the Catholick Bill, and our dismissal from administration begins the Fourth.

MEMOIRS

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DURING MY TIME.

BOOK THE THIRD.

RELATING TO THE EVENTS OF 1806 AND PART OF 1807.

THE point at which I am now arrived formed a new but painful era in my political life. Affection for Mr. Fox had originally induced me to embark in publick. He was now no more. My main object had hitherto been to testify my

admiration of his character, and my devotion to his glory and interests. That object was now removed. If I continued to regulate my conduct by his principles, I could only discern the path by such light as recollection, possibly indistinct and erroneous, would supply. The gratifications which I could derive from a publick life were lessened as much as my means of conducting myself satisfactorily in it, by the sad event of the death of Mr. Fox. I have had, and may again have, some objects of vanity and ambition, like other men; and I trust that a sense of duty to my party and to my country is not less strong in me than in others: but the affection, the admiration, the gratitude that I felt for Mr. Fox, can never again be inspired in me by any other statesman. No political event in which I can bear a share can ever afford me a tenth part of that satisfaction which I should have derived from contributing to place or preserve him in that situation of power which his genius made as it were his right, and which his

benevolence, wisdom, and goodness, would have rendered of general benefit to mankind. Such dreams were over; and it seems extraordinary that I was induced immediately after his death, not only to take a part in publick affairs, but to accept an office in the administration. It will be my endeavour to explain my motives and the circumstances which led me to that determination.

Before I enter on that task, it is impossible not to observe that a few months had changed the scene of publick life and the actors on it almost as much as the situation and views of an individual so nearly connected with one of them as myself. Lord Cornwallis and Lord Nelson, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, died within a year. Lord Thurlow expired a few days after Mr. Fox. His uncle, the Duke of Richmond, survived him but three months; and Lord Lansdowne and Lord Rosslyn had died in the year 1805. All these last-mentioned persons had acted distinguished

parts in the course of their lives. Some, indeed, were almost retired from the publick scene before their deaths: but it was never a matter of indifference with what party they sided, or what opinions they espoused on any great occasion. While they lived, the contentions and divisions which had followed the close of the American War were not entirely forgotten. Many political appearances were still to be traced to that memorable æra; and even where the transactions bore no relation or analogy to the occurrences of that day, the stage continued to be filled with the same performers. Of some I have already spoken; but as I shall have no future occasion to mention the others, I may here preserve such impressions of their characters as were made on my own mind by personal observation, or such as I received from persons best acquainted with their dispositions, manners, and conduct.

Lord Thurlow had been Lord High Chancellor for fourteen years; and had then and since enjoyed great reputation for depth of

thought and reach of understanding, for erudition in classical literature and learning in his profession, for inflexible integrity and sternness of character, which assumed the appearance of austerity and occasionally even of brutality. As a judge, he was revered throughout the country, especially by churchmen and magistrates. As a debater, he was dreaded in Parliament for near twenty years; and even to the period of his death, the slightest word that dropped from his lips, though but to suggest an adjournment or move a summons, was greeted by a large portion of the House of Lords as an oracle of departing wisdom or a specimen of sarcastick wit unrivalled in any assembly. To sustain this tremendous character he had, in fact, little but a rugged brow and sagacious countenance, a deep yet sonorous voice, some happiness of expression without much perspicuity of thought, some learning more remarkable for its singularity than its accuracy or practical use, and a large portion of ponderous but impressive wit, supported

by a studied contempt and scorn for his adversary and his audience. Mr. Fox said once with equal simplicity and drollery, "I suppose no man was ever so wise as Thurlow looks, for that is impossible." His language, his manner, his publick delivery, and even his conduct were all of a piece with his looks; all calculated to inspire the world with a high notion of his gravity, learning, or wisdom; but all assumed for the purpose of concealing the real scantiness of his attainments, the timidity as well as obscurity of his understanding, and the yet more grievous defects of his disposition and principles. He contrived in all his speeches to conjure up an opinion in his audience that choice, not necessity, induced him to leave the knotty points of the question untouched, that he fully understood them, that his knowledge on the subject was of no superficial kind, that he drew his conclusions from long and laborious researches, from premises established on abstruse and philosophical reasonings. He thus implied that the real grounds on which his opinion rested

lay too deep for common intellects to fathom; and that not thinking it worth while to pursue a train of argument which his hearers were unequal to follow, he had contented himself with loitering on his way, playing with the subject on the surface, and exposing the absurdities of his adversaries. This last he often did with much wit, and always with prodigious success. His humour, like the trunk of the elephant, even in its gambols and freaks, seemed to indicate a hidden and bulky strength, which, if called into action, would prove the most formidable of the forest. To give some instances of his manner: when, in the House of Commons Mr. Wedderburn *, on the question whether General Burgoyne, a prisoner on parole, could vote, had displayed his eloquence somewhat affectedly by relating and commenting upon the story of Regulus, Thurlow humorously treated the classical allusion, on which the polished

* First Lord Loughborough, afterwards Earl of Rosslyn.

orator plumed himself, as a dry legal precedent, and began his remarks thereon with saying, "With respect to the *case of Regulus*, on which my *learned* friend has *laid such a stress*." Again in the Lords, when Lord Stormont had been detailing with a solemnity usual to him the transactions of a meeting of country gentlemen at the Thatched House Tavern, Lord Thurlow described that part of the grave diplomatick senator's harangue as "that which the noble Viscount in the green riband may have chanced to hear at the ale-house." And in a similar strain, when Bishop Horsley had quoted Mungo Park's description of the dresses of the native females of Africa as a proof that society had there reached some degree of refinement, he observed upon the argument with this preface: "With respect to the black women with their white petticoats, as far as they or their petticoats have any relation to the question, my *reverend* and learned friend who has introduced them will allow," &c. In scouting the professions, exposing the cant, and lowering

the fopperies of his opponents he was always successful; but with their arguments I never heard him grapple. He could often confound and perplex an adversary; he seldom if ever threw any real light on a question. Mr. Fox said that in the Commons he always beat Mr. Wedderburn, and he reckoned him an abler man; though he qualified that remark by an exception, and said that he never made such a speech as his rival did on the Douglas cause "nor came near it by many miles." Mr. Fox considered that speech of Wedderburn the best legal argument he had heard, or at least second to none but that delivered by Sir Gilbert Elliot* on the Poole election, of which Mr. Fox always spoke with unbounded admiration.

Lord Thurlow felt and even avowed a disbelief in all publick virtue, a persuasion which naturally led him to support all established authority, but which failed, in his morose and unamiable nature, to produce that facility which often accompanies,

* Afterwards Lord Minto.

though it cannot excuse, the political profligacy founded on tenets so lax. It did not even raise him above the petty vanity of favour at Court or with princes. He thought himself ill-used by George the Third, and was long excluded from office; yet he never ventured to take any manly part or to connect himself cordially with those whom he was ready enough to instigate to all the most violent and factious devices of opposition. He dabbled, indeed, in the squabbles and intrigues of Carlton House, and betrayed some complacency in grumbling at the trouble kings and princes had given him. During the last months of his life he was busy in estranging the Prince of Wales from the Ministry by representing their conduct in the affair of the Princess of Wales as timid and unfriendly. He assured him, in coarse and plain language, that she might be exposed, and His Royal Highness released from a contract so painful to his feelings. But he was at the same time cautioning Lord Erskine not to humour the Prince in

what to us he termed the "silly persecution of his wife." Possibly he was fortifying the Princess herself in her defence and resistance by conveying to her his conviction of her innocence, and his assurances of support and popularity in publick. Such unprofitable duplicity could only proceed from a love of mischief; as his uniform practice of postponing the disposal of Church patronage, when Chancellor, to the last moment, could proceed from nothing but a distaste to giving pleasure or conferring any benefits on a human being. He was fond of children, and showed much good humour in encouraging young persons to exercise their minds in conversation. In all other relations of society he was an ill-natured and unfriendly man; sullen to his servants, his mistress (for he was never married), and his daughters; negligent of his early friends; and, though not positively penurious, neither hospitable nor liberal of his money.* He took merit

* Since writing this I have heard, and have pleasure in recording, an instance where he was at least

with both the King and the Prince of Wales for not annexing the Great Seal to the Phantom or Regency Bill in 1788. He assured the Prince that nothing would have induced him to do so; a profession which his enemies have credited from no opinion of his principle, but from some knowledge of his political cowardice. The authority of his judgments has declined with the loss of the deep gruff voice and dark *ruffled* brow which used to enforce them. His will was said to betray much ignorance of law: it certainly manifested injustice of purpose and hardness of heart. But I seem to have caught a portion of his spirit in thus recording the bad qualities of a man against whom I never had the slightest motive for personal or political

liberal. He gave Crabbe in his youth and distress 100*l.*, and forgave him an injudicious and impertinent letter. If he mixed a little of his characteristick sourness with either or both of these good actions, generosity was the chief ingredient; for there was no ostentation, vanity, or design. Mr. Crabbe spoke of it with gratitude full forty years afterwards.

dislike. On the contrary, from his conversation I have derived some instruction and more amusement. While we sat together in Parliament, we were generally on the same side; and I received from him occasional assistance and countenance in debate. What I have written, however, I believe to be strictly true. If I have not softened the darker lines of his character, it is from indignation at the unmerited reputation which he so long enjoyed; and from conviction that one use of contemporary notes is to show those over whom adulation, accident, or hypocrisy shall cast a false and temporary varnish, that justice and truth may yet survive to scrape it off, and a faithful resemblance be ultimately preserved for posterity.

Of his contemporary and rival, Wedderburn (Lord Rosslyn), I have spoken already. I knew very little of him. His character for sterling abilities was never high; for publick virtue, still less so. He was a man of little political principle, and, as far as I could perceive, of shallow

understanding. Yet he had been a very popular speaker in the House of Commons, and even in his decline bore the marks of an accomplished orator. He shone in perspicuous arrangement and narrative, artful statement and pointed invective. In vigour of thought, in depth of knowledge, and in correctness of judgment, he was lamentably deficient. He had likewise more malignity than became a man with so little predilection for any party or principle. He was, however, affectionate in private, liberal to his family, and friendly to his dependents. If his encouragement of literature had been confined to his zeal in procuring a pension for Dr. Johnson, he would have deserved well of every lover of English genius; but he seems, both from taste and system, to have cultivated the society and promoted the studies of men of letters. He was intimate with Hume, Gibbon, and other eminent writers both at Endinburgh and in London. He had himself taken great pains in forming a style, and his correspondence was remarkable for precision and

purity. He abandoned his party while "Junius" was going on, and the anonymous combatant handled him severely both as a lawyer and as a Scotchman; but till that period, and during the early appearance of the letters, he was generally reputed to be the author. Some are still [1824] half inclined to ascribe the work to him; and though every solution of the mystery must be liable to obvious objections, it is not perhaps the most improbable of the many conjectures which have of late years been entertained on the subject.

I have spoken already of the Duke of Richmond and of Lord Lansdowne and have borne my testimony, not from personal knowledge, but from the report of very intimate friends, to the gentle and sober virtues of Lord Cornwallis; who was, however, better qualified to execute the commands of a monarch with mildness, temper, and judgment, than to serve the cause of freedom, and defend the rights of the people in a free government.

I can speak more from my own obser-

vation of Lord Nelson. Many particulars of his life and character are worth preserving. If one were inclined to give any credit to those omens and unaccountable misgivings which by a French name are termed *présentiments*, the conduct of the people of London on the return of Lord Nelson in 1805, and his own language might be alleged as evidence of such feelings, if not with better reason, at least with more truth than the facts on which such belief is generally founded. The enthusiasm inspired by his name on his appearance after the West Indian cruize in 1805 exceeded all that his victories off Egypt or in Denmark had at the time produced. No recent event had occurred to renew such feelings, yet every class of Englishmen seemed to have contracted additional fondness for his person, to take fresh interest in his concerns, and yet to harbour some melancholy presage of his impending fate. Hence, when he was named to a new command, it sounded as if a great victory was decreed; but the joy thus anticipated was

mingled with many forebodings of a dreadful calamity attendant upon it. He had himself expressed his conviction that he should outdo his former atchievements, but should never return to enjoy the glories which he had acquired. His state of health possibly suggested such reflections, for it was at that time far from robust. There are, however, stronger proofs of his repeating such a persuasion on the day of the battle than the disposition to believe what is marvellous generally stops to collect, or, when it does, is able to find. The victory of Trafalgar is a subject for history, and will be accurately recorded. The three admirals died within the year: Villeneuve put an end to his own existence from vexation and despair; Gravina, a gallant, active officer and worthy man, died of his wounds and the unskilful treatment of them; and Nelson fell in the hour of victory, preserving in his last moments the characteristick features of his life—zeal for his country and profession, a love of glory, and a tender, affectionate recollection of his

friends. As he was carried down from deck bleeding and exhausted, he gave distinct orders for the disentanglement of a rope which he perceived to be out of its place; and as he lay gasping in the agonies of death, when asked if the next in rank should succeed, he exclaimed with all the ardour and jealousy of honour which animated him in action, "Not while breath remains in my body:" adding, however, some kind expression of regard for the officer on whom the command was to devolve on his decease. He avowed his hopes that Government, in conveying the national sense of the victory which he had obtained, would not overlook the person on earth to whom he was most attached; and that person was Lady Hamilton.* His inquiries during the

* Whether the Government, which had not the virtue to disown the bad actions that Lady Hamilton had seduced Lord Nelson to commit, did right to neglect his dying injunctions in her favour or not, is a nice question for political casuists, which I do not pretend to decide. Certain it is that she died near Calais in 1814, in great distress and

action were incessant and vehement; his exultation at the certainty of success unaffected and excessive. Throughout the last eventful minutes of his life, he was the same zealous, enthusiastick, and affectionate man as well as consummate seaman and kind yet vigilant commander, he had ever been. Of his person there are many representations, and will be nearly as many descriptions. It was insignificant, and announced none of the qualities of a commander; though his innumerable scars (for he had scarcely ever been in action without receiving a wound), the loss of an eye, and of an arm, and a weather-beaten countenance, marked the hard service he had seen, and gave him, at the age of forty-two, all the appearance of a veteran. His greatness (for who shall

even want. It is equally certain that her baneful ascendancy over Nelson's mind was the chief cause of his indefensible conduct at Naples; that neither he nor she was ever disavowed or discountenanced by our Court for that conduct; and that he retained his affection and gratitude to her to the last hour of his life.

gainsay the greatness of the conqueror of Aboukir, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar?) is a strong instance of the superiority of the heart over the head, and no slight proof that a warm imagination is a more necessary ingredient in the composition of a hero than a sound understanding. Nelson was indeed a perfect seaman. He had too acquired by an exclusive and constant application to his profession, great knowledge of the management of a fleet, and of such tactics as are requisite to bring an enemy to engagement with advantage. His courage, the natural consequence of a boundless love of glory, and a devotion to his duty bordering on superstition, enabled him in the moment of danger to apply all the knowledge and exercise all the judgment he possessed. His faculties remained the same when those of other men were somewhat impaired by agitation, anxiety, sense of responsibility, or fear. His powers of mind seemed to rise, because in action they were comparatively greater; and that circumstance procured for him, from such

as had witnessed him in those moments, a reputation for abilities which never appeared in his conversation, correspondence, opinions, or conduct elsewhere, and which in truth, nature had not conferred upon him. St. Simon observes that goodness of heart and rectitude of intention will upon great occasions elevate and enlighten the understanding of very ordinary men; and the whole life of Nelson is a proof that, combined with disinterested devotion to a cause, they may become permanent and efficient substitutes for great abilities and exalted genius. It is perhaps no ill office to the memory of Nelson to correct any favourable opinion that may be entertained of his understanding; for what justification can be found for one period of his publick life, if he was aware and capable of judging of the nature of the transactions in which he was engaged? But his violation of good faith and justice at Naples, which, if he were considered as a man of sense, would tarnish all his glories, and hand him down to posterity as a perfidious politician, a

bloody and relentless persecutor, is to be accounted for and can alone be palliated by the weakness of his understanding, by the ascendancy which an artful and worthless woman had obtained over a mind unversed in politicks and ignorant of the world; and by the general violence with which the calamities and intolerance of the times had infected men less susceptible of delusion and bigotry than himself. Mrs. Hart or Lady Hamilton, partly by her extraordinary beauty, partly by her talents and cunning, had risen from the lowest condition to be the wife of the British Minister at Naples, and a declared favourite of that Court. When Nelson, distracted at missing the French fleet, had come to Palermo, he obtained chiefly through the influence of that lady (whom he had not seen since 1793) the stores and provisions which enabled him to put to sea again and to overtake the enemy in the Bay of Aboukir. He returned therefore to Naples overflowing with gratitude for the services which Lady Hamilton had rendered to him. Her husband, a man of

mean capacity but of some cunning and experience, gave him his first impressions of the Neapolitan Court, and of the nature of the connection between it and Great Britain. He allowed himself to be guided implicitly by their or her directions, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Captain Foote and other officers, and the earnest representations of many of his friends. The truth of the facts related in a work of Miss Helen Maria Williams has often been questioned, because her narrative is interspersed with extravagant encomiums on many worthless and even detestable characters; but the breach of a capitulation against which many English officers strongly remonstrated, the murder of some who had capitulated, and the leading transactions so disgraceful to the English name and to the memory of Nelson, have been substantiated by subsequent publications. I have ascertained them from Cardinal Ruffo and several other Neapolitans, and from Mr. Bourke, the Danish Minister, who had married an Italian, and was a man of judg-

ment, honour, and veracity, to be in all the material circumstances incontrovertibly true. Lord Nelson indeed was hurt and surprised at the natural indignation with which Mr. Fox had spoken of those events. He had always professed respect for Mr. Fox. He knew the weight which the reproof of so great, so candid, and so cautious a censor must carry with it. Though in conversation he availed himself of a mistake about the name of the fort, and because Mr. Fox had confounded *Castel Nuovo* with *Castel dell' Ovo*, implied, by contradicting that statement, a denial of the whole transaction, he was nevertheless evidently ashamed of his conduct, and conscious that he had been misled by a blind confidence in Lady Hamilton and an undue compliance with the vindictive orders of the Queen of Naples. That the base and wicked conduct of Lady Hamilton was known to him at the time to its full extent, is impossible. She received money from individuals to save the lives of themselves or their relations; and in the instance of a

nephew of Duke Elzi*, if not in more, she suffered the victims to perish without returning the bribe. That these transactions were subsequently known to Nelson I fear cannot be disputed; for he generously repaid such sums from the income of the Duchy of Bronte, and made all the reparation in his power to the injured, though he had not the resolution and virtue to expose,

* Duke Elzi paid sixty thousand ducats to liberate his sisters the Duchesses of Casano and Popoli. The son of the Duchess, long concealed in Elzi's garden, was arrested and condemned to die. Elzi paid money to Lady Hamilton to save him. The young man was nevertheless executed. The money, the exact amount of which I have heard but forgotten, was never returned by Lady Hamilton; but in 1802, Greffer, once gardener at Caserta, and then agent for Nelson's Bronte estate, wrote to Heigelin the banker, "to remit a sum equal to that received by Lady Hamilton in 1798 or 1799 to the Duke of Elzi." In the same letter Nelson was stated to have devoted the whole rent of the Bronte estate to similar purposes, and to be compelled from the largeness of the sums to discharge them by instalments. This letter Mr. Bourke had seen in Heigelin's hands. The Duke of Elzi returned from banishment on the amnesty of 1802.

or to separate himself from, the person who committed the injustice.

Such were the real stains in the character of Nelson; for his vanity, often ridiculous, was utterly unmixed with pride, arrogance, ill-nature, or jealousy. It was rather a diverting proof of his simplicity than a dangerous or offensive quality in his intercourse with others. He smiled with complacency when Lady Hamilton introduced him by the name of "our saviour;" he would press her to sing the most fulsome couplets to his honour; and he acknowledged with the utmost *naïveté*, that his preference of her society to Lady Nelson's arose from the warm praises she bestowed upon him, after which the congratulations of his wife were, he said, cold, flat, and insipid. To his visitors he displayed with the greatest complacency his own portraits and busts laden with inscriptions, and decorated with laurels; and he seemed not aware that such ornaments, however proper elsewhere, should not be found, much less ostentatiously exhibited, in

his own apartments. His publick speeches and private conversation were alike insipid; and though he plumed himself upon his letters and kept copies of them all, his writing with his left hand (which, by a singular precaution he had practised before he lost his right arm) was the most remarkable circumstance about them. Instances of the peculiarity, not to use a harsher term, of his views and opinions might easily be accumulated. He pompously and solemnly conveyed as a piece of serious and earnest intelligence to Lord Lansdowne, as the result of his inquiries in the Mediterranean, that "all republicans were atheists and rascals;" which he considered a fact useful to be known, and fit to be communicated without delay to a person to whom he felt obliged, and for whom he had much esteem and respect. He told me that he felt the fingers of his amputated arm quite distinctly: "which you see," said he, "is a direct proof of the existence of the soul, and makes the thing quite clear." What then, it may be asked, enabled this

man to inspire fleets with a spirit as dauntless as his own? to secure to a degree hitherto unknown the affection and admiration of all who served under him? to extricate himself from the most perilous situations with honuor and address? and to immortalize both his name and his country by the most brilliant atchievements ever performed upon the ocean? His mind was always intensely occupied, either with the immediate purpose of his employment, or the general objects of his profession. His good-nature, simplicity and frankness endeared him to every officer; his courage and generosity attached the sailors; and his disinterested devotion to his profession, his perfect contempt of money when compared with honours or glory (a virtue not common even in our navy) animated all who served with him, inspired the greatest confidence, and ensured the most cordial co-operation in those who employed, as well as in those who obeyed him. He was liberal and open to all; he was affectionate to many; and he had the habit

of consulting his officers on the distribution of his force, imparting to them his views, and opening his projects without jealousy or reserve. That practice, in itself judicious and amiable, had an additional value from the contrast it afforded to the jealous, severe, and ungracious temper of that great admiral, Lord St. Vincent, the only man in the navy whose atchievements could bear comparison with his. To these merits may be added a heart naturally compassionate, and a mind of great native liberality of sentiment, unless warped by the representations of designing men. Though uninstructed himself, he loved to promote the arts, the sciences, and all species of excellence or learning. "Defuit eruditio, non defuit eruditionis voluntas," has been said of somebody, and was true of Lord Nelson. Though fond of flattery and greedy of honour, he was no courtier. He was more scrupulous of hurting the feelings of those who depended upon him by any harsh expression of authority, than fearful of offending the powerful by any

blunt avowal of his sentiments. He was, therefore, never a favourite at St. James's. His amour with Lady Hamilton — if amour it was — shocked the King's morality; and though the perfidies and murders to which it led were perpetrated in the cause of royalty, they could not wash away the original sin of indecorum in the eye of His Majesty. Lord Nelson's reception at Court after the victory of Aboukir, was singularly cold and repulsive. He was presented at the same time as Sir James Pulteney, fresh from his disgrace at Ferrol; "and yet" (observed Nelson at dinner that very day) "the King spoke to Sir James for twenty minutes together, but to me not *two*." He was more surprised than hurt at this slight. He spoke of it with disdain rather than resentment. Lord Nelson had accepted a Neapolitan order without the usual form of demanding leave to wear it; and when he was cautioned not to wear the foreign star above the English Order of the Bath, he neglected the advice, saying, the English had always been there, pointing to the place

and as the King of Naples had put the other above it, so he would keep it where he had been graciously pleased to place it. It required many Aboukirs to atone for such offences. His splendid funeral was not supposed to be approved of at Windsor. Such national marks of gratitude in the opinion of George the Third should be exclusively paid to royalty, and not lavished on men who direct the councils or fight the battles of their country.

With Mr. Pitt I had no personal acquaintance; and in justice to the memory of so remarkable a man, I am bound to remind the reader of the following strictures on his character, that they are written by one who at the period of life in which the strongest impressions are made, was uniformly and earnestly opposed to all his measures, and who never had any subsequent opportunity of correcting any prepossession against him by familiar intercourse or political connection. The accounts of his private manners during his life were very contradictory: they must have been

tinctured with partiality or discoloured by prejudice. He was immersed in politicks and invested with power at so very early a period of life, that he had hardly time to form, or opportunity to display, any marked taste in private. He had been carefully educated at home, and trained, it should seem, to that career which he afterwards ran. His father, the great Lord Chatham, was not only in the habit of teaching him to recite eloquent passages in prose; but after he had finished his lesson in some Latin historian, especially Livy, made him read off and declaim the passage in as eloquent English as the boy could command. At Cambridge he lived in a confined set. They passed with their contemporaries for childish and frivolous company, but afforded ample proof of the test of manliness then most rigorously exacted at our universities — viz. hard drinking. In other vices he never indulged to excess. He has been seen at a gaming table.* When he mixed with the

* He was, I believe, a partner in the Faro Bank at Goosetree's. At that period many men of fashion

world, he enjoyed female society less than most men. He showed some attention and preference to Miss Eden (afterwards Lady Buckinghamshire), and Miss Duncan (afterwards Lady Dalrymple Hamilton); but he never contracted an intimacy likely to lead either to marriage or to intrigue. With respect to his conversation, his admirers said it was occasionally playful in the extreme, and always good-humoured and brilliant — a judgment which the notes left by Mr. Wilberforce*, and the testimony of Lord Wellesley, seem strongly to confirm: others pretended that it was either excessively childish or very sarcastick and over-

and honour did not scruple to belong to such associations and to avow it. I mention the circumstance not in discredit of Mr. Pitt; but to prove, by the example of so correct and decorous a man, the temper and character of these times.

* The very amiable traits recorded in that book, though traced perhaps by a partial hand, are yet sufficient to prove that Pitt possessed those high and honourable feelings and that kindness of heart which one always wishes and seldom fails to find in men of superior understanding.

bearing. How shall we reconcile such contradictory reports? Long possession of power possibly rendered him impatient of any difference of opinion; and the constant exercise of his intellect in business and debate was not unlikely to be relieved in his stolen hours of leisure by excessive relaxation. It seems impossible that a man so brilliant in debate, so quick in apprehension, and so happy in expression, should not have excelled occasionally in the intercourse of private society. It is true, few sallies of wit or remarks on life or manners are recorded of him; but George North (Lord Guilford) was probably right when, in the heat of party dissensions having met Mr. Pitt in a country house*, he wrote word that he was sorry to find that "so bad a politician was so very pleasant a man." He is said to have disliked all conversation on books. Indeed, few men who have obtained power by their talents, and none who have combined with it so much knowledge,

* Duke of Rutland's.

judgment, and command of language, have manifested by their publick actions less relish for science or literature, or less inclination to encourage genius in the liberal arts. I will not speak of him as a statesman; for be it prejudice or be it observation, I have perhaps been too apt to consider him as none; especially if that character be exclusively assigned to those who conduct with wisdom and foresight the *foreign* politicks of their country. He appeared to have no very fixed opinions on government; but his education and original connections must have given him some predilection for popular notions; and although he too often defended and even promoted measures of an opposite tendency, he was at great pains to do so on the grounds of immediate expediency rather than of principle. He betrayed perhaps somewhat more of a grovelling attachment to the false glory of office than became a patriot, or even a man of that haughty spirit which his exterior and publick deportment announced, but which there

is good reason to believe from Mr. Wilberforce's affectionate testimony, was belied in private intercourse by very amiable manners. He had, indeed, wonderful sagacity in discerning, and as much dexterity in availing himself of, the temper of Parliament and the publick. He is said to have been a great financier, but inferior men have excelled him in that line: and he was after all greatest and most wonderfully great as an orator and a man of business. As he never studied very intensely, and was latterly reproached not unjustly with indolence, his excellence both in Parliament and business is chiefly to be ascribed to the miraculous quickness of his apprehension. This made him seize even the details of any business, however complicated, with rapidity; and a methodical mind joined to his matchless command of words enabled him to state them and to reason upon them both in publick and private, with perspicuity and effect. In statement he was superior to all his contemporaries, some of whom surpassed his great rival in that

necessary but subordinate qualification of an orator. In quickness of apprehension and readiness of argument he equalled—he could not excel Mr. Fox: he had too a more equal flow of language, and in little matters especially, greater selection, perhaps more elegance and precision of expression. But if his diction was more generally splendid, and his delivery more uniformly dignified, these very excellences rendered his speeches in some little degree artificial and monotonous. The light of his eloquence, dazzling as it was, sometimes became fatiguing; and he wanted the pleasantry and illustration to entertain, the warmth of language, feeling, and utterance to stir, and the power and practice of philosophical research, and deep original thinking to enlighten his audience; all which the transcendent genius of his opponent eminently possessed. But as an orator he was a wonderful man. He did not indeed surpass in my judgment—and I believe in his own he did not equal—Mr. Fox; but he certainly

came near him, and in the opinion of many kept pace with him. He as certainly contributed to improve him. His keenness in detecting and his felicity in exposing the slightest fallacy, corrected many of the imperfections and reformed some of the negligences of Mr. Fox. True it is that all the powers of the latter were kept in constant exercise to counteract the effect which Mr. Pitt's ready acuteness and splendid declamation seldom failed to produce. The inferiority of the moderns to the ancient models of taste and eloquence has been often insisted upon, and is, I believe, generally acknowledged; yet I doubt whether at any period or in any language two such orators as Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt ever appeared at the same time in the same assembly. At any rate, those who have witnessed their debates in the House of Commons, have heard the art of public and unpremeditated speaking in as great perfection as human faculties exercised in our language can attain. What may have been in ancient times, or what might be now the

effect of orations carefully composed and admirably delivered by men of great philosophical research and political talents, I know not; but it is difficult to conceive how in readiness of argument and rapid selection of topicks any orator could exceed Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox: nor can I believe that any man could without premeditation rival the luminous arrangement, the propriety and splendour of diction of the former; or the rapidity, the force of argument, the pleasantry of illustration, the originality and simplicity of thought, the animation and vehemence of the latter. *Magis pares quam similes* has been more than once applied to these two great orators. There was more inequality in the different passages of the same speech, but less in the speeches of Mr. Fox than in those of his rival. Mr. Fox would have been yet more perfect than he was, had he attended more strictly to method in his discourse; and Mr. Pitt would surely have been more delightful, had he less ostentatiously displayed his arrangement, or could he have mingled

a greater variety of manner and matter in his orations. It is also observable that Mr. Fox, who was somewhat negligent on the inferior parts of a question, always rose with his subject and shone brightest on those great occasions when all the passions of his auditors were roused, and all their intelligence called forth by the importance and magnitude of the subject. Mr. Pitt, on the other hand, *nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.* The slightest and most frivolous detail grew luminous, polished, and splendid as he handled it; the least-striking part of the subject derived interest and importance from his impressive delivery, well-balanced elocution, and fortunate language. If he ever fell short of expectation, if he ever lapsed into cold and trite declamation, it was when great questions of national policy or fundamental principles required the original genius of a statesman, or the deep researches of a philosopher, to manage the discussion. On such emergencies, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Mr. Grattan, or Sir William Grant, could alone have maintained

the most remote semblance of a contest, however unequal, with Mr. Fox; and the other great popular speakers, with Mr. Sheridan, and even Mr. Pitt himself at their head, shrank before and beside him into the inferior characters of adroit debaters and declamatory advocates. Whether Mr. Pitt's style of speaking was more generally liked, or more easily attained, I know not; but certain it is that he was more frequently imitated with success than Mr. Fox; and the oratory of our Parliament (even at this day) * is founded upon his model of excellence rather than upon that of Mr. Fox.

In endeavouring to convey to my reader my impression of Mr. Pitt, and especially of his oratory—the only quality of which I could speak from personal recollection—I have been insensibly led into a comparison of his speaking with that of Mr. Fox; and

* I *transcribe* this in 1824, and the observation is still true, though eight or ten years, which have elapsed since I *wrote* the passage, have sensibly altered the general style of eloquence in our assemblies.

I will therefore subjoin one or two remarkable circumstances about those two great parliamentary rivals.* There was as strong a contrast in their personal appearance and their private life, as in their political opinions and career. Mr. Pitt was tall, stiff, and somewhat awkward, though very upright; his complexion ruddy but fair, his eye in the air, and his countenance (which, except when animated in speaking, was far from expressive) distant, stately, and forbidding. Mr. Fox, whose height did not exceed that of middle-sized Englishmen, had a sallow complexion, a thoughtful brow, and kind countenance, a slovenly but not ungraceful gait, and a corpulent figure, which, however, was not unwieldy. Mr. Fox had been educated at a publick school, had taken his full share of fashion, gaiety, and dissipation, had lived at various periods of his life with politicians, sportsmen, jockeys, foreigners, and men of letters, and in short with every sort of society. Mr.

* Appendix A.

Pitt, brought up very privately, knew few even of his own relations*, and till he was immersed in politicks, had confined his society to his college and the members of the profession (the law), which he had embraced. It is not wonderful that the sons of Lord Chatham and Lord Holland should have possessed talents for publick life, or even that they should have exerted them in opposition to one another; but it is at least whimsical that from a concurrence of circumstances, combined with the philosophical powers of Mr. Fox, the sons changed places, as it were, and each seemed to inherit, with a double portion of his own father's abilities, some of the principles and fortunes of his father's antagonist. Their rivalry was predicted very early. The

* Of the Grenvilles, his first cousins, he knew nothing till they came into Parliament. Thomas Grenville told me (what seems incredible) that he never was in his company till 1793; and Lord Erskine assured me that in Alice's Coffee-house, when William Grenville (afterwards Lord Grenville) came in, Mr. Pitt, who was drinking tea with Erskine, asked who that young man was.

Duchess of Leinster related to me a conversation, at which she was present, between her sister Lady Caroline, and Mr. Henry Fox (first Lord Holland). Lady Caroline, in expostulating with her husband on his excessive indulgence to his children, and to Charles in particular, added, "I have been this morning with Lady Hester Pitt; and there is little William Pitt not eight years old, and really the cleverest child I ever saw; and brought up so strictly, and so proper in his behaviour, that, mark my words, that little boy will be a thorn in Charles's side as long as he lives." Lord Chatham is said to have foretold his second son's success as an orator, even when he was only nine years old, from the clear report which he gave of a debate which he had heard from under the gallery in the House of Commons. When Mr. Pitt had just concluded the first speech which he ever made in Parliament, and while Mr. Fox was complimenting his young supporter and future rival on the brilliant commencement of his parliamentary career, an old member

(I think a General Grant) accosted them thus:—"Aye, Mr. Fox, you may well commend that speech, none here but yourself could make such another; and I don't despair hearing you both, as I have done your fathers before you, battling it and abusing one another for nights together in this house." Mr. Fox felt startled at the awkwardness of the compliment; but Mr. Pitt with great readiness and delicacy replied, "It is natural enough in you, General, to wish for the life of a Methusalem." The abilities of both were foretold at an early age. The letters of my family are full of predictions of Mr. Fox's future celebrity, while he was yet a child. At Eton, at college, and abroad, he gave strong indications of his extraordinary powers. Lord Lansdowne (I believe) told me that at the trial of Lord Ferrers, he asked Lord Mansfield the name of a young man, with whose countenance he had been struck; and Lord Mansfield answered, "That is Fox's son Charles, with twice his parts and half his sagacity." Such observations and pre-

dictions are often made on young men: when they are contradicted by the event, they are forgotten; when they turn out true, one is always childish enough to feel some pleasure in recording them.

Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt had very little private intercourse. At the close of Lord North's administration, they had acted together in opposition; but Mr. Pitt, though he censured the war and espoused the cause of reform, was very cautious not to entangle himself with personal engagements to any party. In 1792 they had an interview. It was the object of Mr. Pitt to separate Mr. Fox from some of his friends, and particularly from Sheridan. He wished to make him a party to a coalition between the Ministry and the aristocratical branches of the Whigs. Mr. Fox, with his usual generosity, declined the offer. Though the private intercourse between them was so limited, there was less personal enmity between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox than so long a period of political hostility and oratorical conflict could be supposed to engender.

There was certainly less than had subsisted between their fathers, though their fathers had not been so long nor so uniformly opposed to each other. The truth is, that the parliamentary cabals which divided the Court during the reign of George the Second and the first twelve years of George the Third, being mere struggles for favour and power, created more real ill blood and personal rancour between individuals, than the great questions of policy and principle which arose on the American and the French wars. There is more hatred, malice, and rancour in the miserable dissensions of a college or the petty squabbles of a steward's room, than on the field of a bloody battle, or in the respective cabinets of contending princes and states. The faults of Mr. Pitt were, on the whole, such as an early and long possession of power would naturally engender in most minds. It is more wonderful that he retained so many good qualities, than that he learnt so many bad ones in a Court and a Cabinet. He was no doubt too fond of office, but he

disdained all petty intrigue; and if neither a frank nor open character, he was at least exempt from absolute falsehood or hypocrisy. His affection for Lord Melville was steady and honourable, and his conduct on the detection and disgrace of his old colleague, the most amiable passage of his life. He was indeed sadly perplexed with it, and Lord Melville's strange conduct on the subject added greatly to his perplexities. Lord Melville never mentioned the subject to him; and when he took him down alone in a post-chaise to Windsor, with the hopes of facilitating some communication and concert about it, he would neither state the case nor converse on any part of it. This reserve mortified Mr. Pitt: it likewise embarrassed him exceedingly; for, in utter ignorance of the real case, he knew not what points to avoid or what to press. He was deeply affected with the whole business. "We can get over Austerlitz," said he to Mr. Huskisson at Bath, "but we can never get over the tenth report. Such is the nature of Englishmen." I have not spoken

of his disinterestedness about money. It was however acknowledged by his enemies, and would in a man of inferior capacity have deserved to be recorded as a virtue. But it is a negative virtue at best; and in a statesman of great ability who is contending for "crowns and kingdoms," and has neither children nor family to provide for, it seems of no difficult attainment. He must be a fool indeed who would barter the mighty space of such large honours for so much trash as may be grasped at, thus—

Οἱ δὲ χαρίεντες καὶ πρακτικοὶ τιμὴν, τοῦ γὰρ πολιτικοῦ βίου σχεδὸν τοῦτο τὸ τέλος. — Ethica Nicom., lib. i. cap. 3.

> Desire of earthly muck doth foully blend
> And low debase the high heroick sprite
> That joys for cronws and kingdoms to contend, &c.
>
> Spenser, *Faerie Queene.*

I now resume my narrative. The King had watched the progress of Mr. Fox's disorder. He could hardly suppress his indecent exultation at his death. He gave however Lord Grenville his full confidence

in appearance, and even enjoined him to take his own time in forming a new Administration. He no doubt hoped that Lord Grenville would have recourse to the courtiers and the Pittites to repair the loss which his government had sustained. When however his honourable and friendly conduct to the Whigs was known, the King acquiesced. Perhaps the plot for defeating the Ministry was not yet ripe; perhaps His Majesty sagaciously foresaw that they would soon furnish him with a more favourable opportunity. Lord Grenville acted on this occasion with a fairness which secured him the affections of many, and should have dispelled the suspicions of all, who had been uniformly attached to Mr. Fox. Had Lord Grenville in the new arrangements sought for strength in the opposite party, had he consulted the wishes of the Court rather than his own principles and consistency, he would have conciliated the King, fixed himself permanently in office, and divested every party in the state of the means of annoying him in Parliament. His

secret motives for such conduct might have been selfish and reprehensible; but plausible justifications would not have been wanting, and no flagrant sacrifice either of men or of principles would have appeared. His adoption of a contrary course was a proof of the directness of his intentions, and of his inflexible steadiness in political connection. It was, too, a gratifying testimony of the confidence which his new friends had inspired in his honourable mind. Many at that time, less acquainted with his upright and manly character, entertained some jealousy of his proceedings; and some have since yet more unwarrantably suspected his views and questioned his sincerity, withholding from him that confidence and support without which no man can conduct any large independent body with satisfaction to himself or prospect of success to the party. The feelings alluded to, and other difficulties incident to the distribution of offices, created some embarrassment and more delay. Lord Howick (Grey) alone was, in the judgment of all our

friends, qualified for leader in the House of Commons. The Admiralty, which he then held, was too laborious an office to be filled by a person in that situation. Among various arrangements, a peerage for Mr. Windham was suggested. That plan was rejected with some marks of displeasure by that gentleman. It did not tend to allay his growing discontent with the Grenvilles. He thought that they proposed to remove him from his field of battle rather with a view of lessening his power than that of increasing his dignity. "They want ordnance," said he, "and yet would begin by spiking one of their great guns." With respect to my own destination, and my acceptance of the Privy Seal, my motives will be best understood and the circumstances best related by extracts from a letter I wrote at the time to Lord Lauderdale at Paris.

To the Earl of Lauderdale, Paris.

"Holland House,
"Sept. 22. 1806.

"DEAR LAUDERDALE.

"With regard to home arrangements, though talking of our politicks now is discussing the means when two-thirds of the object are gone, yet I have thought and heard more about them for these last five days than I could have imagined that I had been able, and even more than I feel I ought to be able. Soon after the event, I collected from my friends two things: 1st. That it was the general opinion, and Grey's opinion too, that with the Admiralty he could not lead the House of Commons. 2ndly. That my uncle's friends felt very jealous of the Grenvilles, and thought that my name in the Cabinet was absolutely *necessary*, and in the Foreign Office *desirable*, to prove that there was a disposition to cultivate my uncle's friends, to preserve his system and principles, and to give to his memory a portion of that influence which his supe-

riority had hitherto secured to his party. I found that Lords Howick and Grenville had already had some conversations together, and that they had agreed to settle the arrangements between them. I conveyed, therefore, by letter through my uncle Fitzpatrick (by whose judgment I resolved to be guided), and in conversation with Grey, my own feelings on the subject; which were, that the only objects of personal ambition I had ever felt were in the foreign line, that my uncle's kindness and my situation had lately shown me the more brilliant objects in that line apparently more in my reach than I before had ever imagined that they would be, and that certainly the only places that could gratify my private ambition were the Embassy to Paris or the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs; that I was in no hurry for either, but that I should feel a little annoyed if I saw the ultimate object — viz., the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs—blocked up to me for ever; that for the good of the Ministry I thought your being in the Cabinet was essential,

and that both your publick and private claims on all friends of my uncle were without comparison stronger than those of any two persons together whatsoever; that I felt (and I do feel most deeply) a great reluctance to take any seat in the Cabinet without you, and that that feeling was not merely out of affection and honour, but interest also; for I felt your presence there was to me next to that which now is out of our reach for ever; that with you there I would take any place in or out of the Cabinet; but that if they would not admit two, and if your admission alone, however, advantageous to the party, would not answer the purpose of satisfying some of those who look to my appointment as a more manifest deference to Mr. Fox's memory, and therefore a *sine quâ non*, that I confessed the appointment to the Foreign Affairs seemed to me the only one that would satisfy my mind for coming in without you, and that would bear upon the face of it to you and to the world that I was taken at once to the post which my poor uncle had

destined for me; that I knew you thought so much that it was his wish, that you would not like any feeling of my own either for myself or for you to interfere with it; but that any other place without you was only doing what to my uncle I had said I would never do, when he talked of giving me office—viz. being put over your head. To this I was told by Grey that the admission of two was out of the question; that Grenville had insisted in justice to himself that Tom should be Secretary of State, if Lord Howick was one, and Lord Spencer at the Admiralty; that he was sure his being Foreign Secretary would not be the means of keeping me longer out of that office, though no stipulation could with propriety be made; that without the arrangements incident upon Tom Grenville's quitting the Board of Controul for the Admiralty or Secretaryship, they could not meet the House of Commons; and that unless, upon the retirement of Lord Fitzwilliam, with a seat in the Cabinet, I took the Privy Seal, the Administration must break up, or look for

strength in the opposition ranks; and that I must not defer giving a positive answer.

"Upon this proposal I took twenty-four hours to consider and consult General Fitzpatrick, who justly observed, that we were no longer in a situation to expect such terms as we formerly might; that the replacing the vacant seat in the Cabinet with a Foxite, and the vacant office with a Foxite, was so far good as it preserved the same proportion of votes in the Cabinet, and the appearance as well as reality of a pacifick system in the Foreign Affairs; that a rupture with the Court and still more with the other branches of administration on the distribution of places, was always bad; that it would be a complete dissolution of my uncle's party, as at such a moment we should go out yet weaker in proportion to our entrance than parties usually do; that if it went off on such grounds, it would be because I would have at once a high and favourite post, or because I would insist on doing what my poor uncle himself was unable to effect—viz. forcing you into

the Cabinet; that *my* being there was not from my personal qualities, but from my name and situation; to stickle for another *instead* of myself, could not answer the purpose; to stickle for another *in addition* to myself, was being unreasonable and impracticable. He and those whom I consulted, however, told me that the arrangement was not what they approved; that they agreed with me as to the prodigious service (all claims put aside) that your presence in the Cabinet would afford, and as to the precarious state in which, as a party, we must stand according to this arrangement. As far as my personal ambition and wish for a particular office were concerned, they fully convinced me that I ought to waive them; and your excessive disposition to accommodate, especially where your own interests are concerned, had a great deal of weight with me. So that, after much reflection, I sent Grey the ostensible letter which I enclose."

To Lord Howick.

"'Holland House, Sept. 19, 1806.

"'DEAR LORD HOWICK,

"'I have thought over the subject of our conversation of to-day, and send you the result of my reflections upon it.

"'My first object is to contribute, as much as I personally can, towards keeping my uncle's political friends together upon the same principles as they and he uniformly acted on; my second, to afford every support in my power to the present Administration in England and Ireland.

"'You are a better judge than myself of the means of obtaining these objects; and I am ready, as far as I am personally concerned, to acquiesce in the arrangements you mentioned, or indeed in any other which you and those to whose support we look, deem necessary for the attainment of them.

"'You will, however, agree with me, that it is indispensably necessary to consult the Prince of Wales and some other per-

sons, without whose cordial approbation and support, my admission into the Cabinet can be of no service whatever to the Government.

"'As an individual, I have no right or pretension to make any stipulation with Ministers at a moment when they offer me a great situation; but if you could have it understood that in case of peace, I should exchange situations with Lauderdale, or, in case of the rupture of the negotiation, should at my option resign in his favour, you would certainly make an arrangement infinitely more agreeable to me, more honourable to the party, and in my opinion more advantageous to the Government.

"'Yours,

"'VASSALL HOLLAND.'

"I introduced the word *Ireland;* for unless the Duke of Bedford or a Foxite is there, my acquiescence is at an end. And my consultation of the Prince and some others is not a matter of course, but one by which I mean to abide; for, though I am

too good a Whig to bind myself at all times to the will of a prince, yet, situated as parties are, unless the Foxite side of the Ministry have the full confidence of some great aristocrats, and the sanction, support, and favour of the Prince, they will have no weight at all, and will be merely *employed* under another party.

"I should have preferred, had it been possible, telling you this by word of mouth; for I fear you may imagine some discontent with Grey, which does not exist. He has behaved in the handsomest, openest, and fairest manner possible. As to my *personal* views, I am sure that he means to consider them, and will at all times be ready to make sacrifices for them; but certainly I know enough of him to know that, when the time comes, he will feel it to be a greater sacrifice than he now thinks, or than I then may be disposed to accept.

"Grenville's answer to that part of my letter which regards you, is, that to the exchange in case of peace he sees no objection; but so immediate a resignation as the

other supposes would have an awkward appearance, and Grey, I know, thinks that part inadmissible.

"Grey has, perhaps, neglected *consulting* persons somewhat too much. He wrote, however, at my request, to the Prince; and the Prince is in better humour than he was. Sheridan has been behaving strangely, and will I, fear, do much mischief. But considering his connections, talents, and appearance of steadiness to the mob and the publick, I fear there is too much disposition to set him at defiance, and a greater desire to get rid of him altogether, than is either prudent or perhaps right. In short, without your good sense and temper I do not think we can go on; and well employed as you are, I cannot but regret your absence, though I rejoice every day at your escape from India.

"I am,

"Yours, &c.

"VASSALL HOLLAND."

Mr. Sheridan, who is mentioned at the end of the above letter, had always entertained a strong but secret ambition to represent a populous place. With all the talent and sense of ridicule that he possessed, and with more publick feeling and possibly more private honour than he had credit for, or than some passages of his life imply, he was nevertheless liable to little impressions of jealousy truly ludicrous and much beneath a man of superior genius. He had seen with emotions of envy the uniform popularity of Mr. Fox in Westminster. During the secession he had manœuvred to confirm and even to entrap his friend into a resolution of quitting Parliament. He laid a plot for succeeding him; and Mr. Fox was not averse to promote it: but his adherents detected and would not permit it. On his death, however, Mr. Sheridan stood forward, but without success. On the general election and the retirement of Lord Percy, he again stood for Westminster, against the advice of his friends and without the concurrence

of a Government to which he belonged. He thought, in his inordinate vanity, that he might defy the Court, the Aristocracy, and the Reformers; and such was his confidence in his own personal popularity and management, that he not only neglected but derided and insulted the clubs and committees through whose agency Mr. Fox's elections had been generally secured. He was bitterly deceived. Our party supported him very feebly. He was absolutely execrated by the people. With great exertion I obtained for him some reluctant assistance from the Ministry; and he was with much difficulty brought in as second Member to Sir Samuel Hood, against the cry of the people, the inclination of all our friends, and the unbiassed wishes of the voters. This transaction did us harm. Mr. Sheridan's mortified vanity sheltered itself under the false persuasion that nothing but the coldness of Government, and the distrust of him manifested by the friends of Hood, had ever endangered his election. He soon afterwards began to

attribute his own unpopularity to his new connections. He grew more and more averse to the name of Grenville; and the members of that family, too starch to feel any real cordiality in the cause of a man whom they deemed scandalously immoral and profligate, concurred with a very bad grace in a measure which they had disapproved and deprecated from the beginning. This transaction was very mischievous in its effects on the publick mind. The Whigs incurred the odium of pressing an obnoxious candidate on the city of Westminster against the reformers. Some few of our old friends lamented the exposure of Mr. Sheridan; more drew from the mismanagement of the election an inference of unwillingness or incapacity in the leaders of the party to ingratiate themselves or make common cause with the people. Our warmest partizans thought themselves neglected, or prostituted to purposes of ministerial convenience. Thus did the perverse vanity of Mr. Sheridan tend as much to shake the confidence of

the Metropolis in the Whigs as to injure and humiliate himself. Election details once over are not very interesting. I have, however, mentioned the circumstances which led Mr. Sheridan to stand for Westminster, and the disposition of Ministers and people on that occasion, because I am persuaded that the consequences of those transactions were more extensive than they appeared. The loss of popularity which the Whigs had incurred was very manifest, when, on their dismissal from office, they had to rely upon the co-operation of persons out of doors for support; and when the power of the Crown devolved on the Heir Apparent, the effect of Mr. Sheridan's mortified vanity was very sensibly felt in the course of the numerous negotiations which occurred between Carlton House and Lord Grenville. Those who set no value on the triumph of a popular election must be prepared to regard the indifference and even the hostility of the publick without surprise or indignation. The people will feel no interest

in the quarrel of men who have disdained to make common cause with them, or who, when in power, have invited them to no share in it. If you feel not the importance of their suffrages when with you, you will never have them in a moment of difficulty or distress. The Sovereign People, like other sovereigns, exact respect and even flattery, as well as service. The pride which refuses to pay such a tribute either at Court or on the hustings may be most respectable, but he who indulges it should cast away all ambition. Neither talent nor luck can confer in this country any permanent influence over our councils on a man who has nothing in his character congenial with the prince or the people. Perhaps the Ministry of Lord Grenville, the most honest and most useful that I have known, was an illustration of the truth of this remark. The good-will of the people was lost very soon. The opposition of Mr. Whitbread, the suspicions of Sir Francis Burdett, and the perverseness and vanity of

Mr. Sheridan, were no doubt great causes of that change. Yet it must be owned that the manners and tone of our Administration, amidst its many wise and liberal measures, contributed very sensibly to accelerate it. The King and his household were from the beginning and throughout hostile to the Ministry. The Prince of Wales, who had been active in the formation of it, was neglected, or thought himself so. Some symptoms of his ill-humour had transpired before I was in office. That circumstance was an additional motive with me for making his approbation a condition in my acceptance of the office. His letter to me on the occasion was more than gracious; it was kind and friendly. But though he approved my taking office, and expressed some good-will to the Ministry, he distinctly disclaimed all connection with them, and repeated above once his total indifference to politicks since the death of Mr. Fox. He was indeed at that time deeply engaged with his passion for Lady Hertford, contracted during his ne-

gotiations with her family to have Miss Seymour, their niece, under the care of Mrs. Fitzherbert. His health was reported to be bad, and his appearance confirmed the report. Those, however, who had made a study of his gallantries, recognised his usual system of love-making in these symptoms. He generally, it seems, assailed the hearts which he wished to carry by exciting their commiserations for his sufferings and their apprehensions for his health. With this view he actually submitted to be bled two or three times in the course of a night, when there was so little necessity for it that different surgeons were introduced for the purpose, unknown to each other, lest they should object to so unusual a loss of blood. In the meanwhile, his professions of indifference about politicks were too readily believed, or at least too implicitly acted upon by Lord Grenville and the Ministers. Mr. Fox, during his life, occasionally consulted and frequently saw the Prince of Wales. He apprized him of the

business impending, and had at least the air of soliciting his opinion, sanction, and assistance. When, however, the inquiry into the conduct of the Princess of Wales was instituted, some of the Cabinet from scruple, others from indolence, and perhaps one or two from dislike of the connection or from want of habits of intercourse at Carlton House, seemed to avoid rather than seek an opportunity of conferring with him. His petty jobs were not only refused, but neglected. Little discussion and no intrigue accompanied the rejection of his direct or indirect applications; and he had not only the mortification of finding his dependents unrewarded, but that which perhaps he deemed a yet greater one, of not talking over their merits with the Ministers or affecting a share in some of the publick appointments. My office gave me no means of ascertaining how these matters stood. I had no patronage, and no business originates with the Privy Seal. I had however a suspicion that Carlton House was neglected. I could not indeed imagine (though I now

believe it was so) that Lord Moira was as silent on publick and party affairs to the Prince of Wales, as he unquestionably was about the Prince's wishes to the Cabinet and the Ministry. I concluded that he communicated such matters as he could without breach of duty to the Prince; and from delicacy to him I avoided courting His Royal Highness too much. I paid my personal homage pretty constantly at Carlton House; but I never sought, or rather I avoided being the channel of any intercourse between him and the Government. I believe I did wrong; I am sure I acted unwisely for the interests of the Administration. If I had been aware of Lord Moira's overstrained scruples, I should have recommended to my colleagues a more unreserved communication with Carlton House from motives of policy; but had I been apprized of the degree to which the Prince had been consulted not only on the formation but on the principles of the Ministry, I should have thought every member of it bound to concert

with him certain publick measures* more fully than they did. I write this in 1813, when the conduct of the Prince must diminish all regret for any ill-treatment which he may have received. But the course of narrative has led me to the subject, and truth compels me to acknowledge that he had some reason to complain of the Ministers, and that their impartial historian has yet more reason to lament their impolicy in neglecting him.

The influence of Lady Hertford was not immediately exerted to estrange him from his old political friends. Her character was as timid as her manners were stately, formal, and insipid. Her husband, though chagrined at the loss of his office (the

* I allude to questions relating to Ireland and the Roman Catholicks; for I learnt from the Duke of Bedford that, previous to his departure for his Lord Lieutenancy, meetings of Irish proprietors, and consultations with Mr. Fox himself and others, had been held at Carlton House. The result of them was a recommendation from the proprietors, with liberty to use the Prince's name, to the Catholicks not to urge their claims prematurely.

Mastership of the Horse), and much connected with his nephew, Lord Castlereagh, had such an habitual respect for power, that the motive must have been very strong which would have impelled him to advise his friends to break with any persons in possession of it. When, however, Lord Yarmouth returned from his negotiation, there was a more powerful instigator of a breach with the Whigs in that family, and one who from interest as well as pique and resentment was likely to promote it. Many have attributed Lord Yarmouth's inconsiderate and ill-timed production of his powers, to the most base and mercenary motives. There is not, however, a shadow of proof of his making money at the time in the funds. Men of his wealth, expectations, and understanding (for he is not deficient in the last quality, though it bears a small proportion to the others), would scarcely risk their reputation and safety in such a transaction. The credit given to such a tale shows his general character, and seems to reflect on the judg-

ment of Mr. Fox in selecting him for a negotiation. His reasons were simple and obvious. The communication from M. Talleyrand was verbal. It was necessary, in the first instance, to avoid all written intercourse with the French Government. No channel, therefore, could be so proper to convey the answer, as the man who had heard the proposal. Moreover, the residence of Lord Yarmouth's family in France made his return thither less liable to observation; and excepting himself, no one would have been permitted to remain twelve hours at Paris without producing full powers to negotiate a treaty. The course of the negotiation is published. I wrote the ninth chapter of the "Annual Register" of 1806*; and it contains nearly all that I know on the subject. Lord Yarmouth was impatient to produce his powers! M. D'Oubril† was

* Reprinted. App. F.

† Many years after this unfortunate and somewhat mysterious transaction (viz. in May, 1835), Pozzo Di Borgo told me that D'Oubril signed the peace without any written instructions which could justify him in so

equally so to sign a peace. These two circumstances were the chief causes that prevented its conclusion. After the Russian Court had disavowed M. D'Oubril, we might indeed have made a separate peace on terms comparatively advantageous. There were no positive engagements to prevent us from doing so. But not only the feelings of the publick at the virtual abandonment of our ally would have made it difficult to reconcile Parliament to such a step, but the continuance of war between Russia and

doing; but he had received private verbal assurances from Alexander himself that he hoped he would return with a treaty of peace in his hand, and broad hints that His Imperial Majesty thought his Minister Czartoriski too warlike. Talleyrand seized the moment of Czartoriski's dismissal to cajole D'Oubril into a compliance. D'Oubril signed the peace, and according to his own phrase carried "son ouvrage et sa tête," to lay them at the foot of his sovereign; and that sovereign, not without a pang of remorse, permitted his new Minister, General Budberg, to disavow and even exile him; but after some years of disgrace, restored him to the Russian diplomacy, loaded him with favours, compliments, and no small share of confidence.

France would have inevitably rekindled hostilities in Europe; and our peace would have been of very short duration.

Mr. Whitbread was dissatisfied with both the result and conduct of the negotiation. He arraigned it in Parliament in a powerful speech, which he ended by moving a resolution couched unnecessarily and offensively in the exact terms in which Lord Howick had moved to censure Mr. Pitt for the continuance of the war. His line of argument gave too much countenance to a most unfounded notion then studiously promulgated in France, that Mr. Fox had been overruled in the Cabinet, that his pacifick spirit no longer guided our councils, and that Lord Lauderdale in particular was averse to peace and had become a convert to that warlike system which during the life of Mr. Fox he had so often and so warmly resisted. Lord Lauderdale, as a Minister, was bound to obey his instructions; perhaps as a writer*

* His tenacity about the *uti possidetis*, and his frequent recurrence to that phrase, led Napoleon to

he has a tone of controversy which by persons unacquainted with his excellent temper might be regarded as an indication of an unwillingness to conciliate his correspondent. But he was, in truth, not only more pacifick in his dispositions than the instructors whom he obeyed, but diligent in discovering every justifiable pretext for sinking or deferring such parts of them as he thought obstacles to peace; in bringing every favourable prospect before the view of the Cabinet; and in recommending every imaginable sacrifice that could be made with honour for the attainment of it. He was more inclined to believe in the practicability of peace, and infinitely more disposed to make additional offers *for the chance of it*, than Mr. Fox. He could not, indeed, desire it more; but Mr. Fox very soon expressed to me his conviction, founded not on difficulties in the Cabinet, but on

reproach him with an adherence to "des formules Latines," which to those well acquainted with the nature of Lauderdale's acquirements in classical phraseology was diverting enough.

what he termed the shuffling conduct of the French, that the negotiation would fail. I believe no difference of opinion on the negotiation ever occurred between Mr. Fox and any of his colleagues; nor did I ever hear any apprehension of any such difference occurring from him after Lord Yarmouth was sent back with his answer to Paris. Insinuations, therefore. of his being overruled in the Cabinet were utterly groundless. It is my firm opinion, founded on my knowledge of the sentiments of Mr. Fox, and confirmed by subsequent reflection, that had the French Government conducted itself as it did with Mr. Fox in full vigour and health and at the Foreign Office, the negotiation would have terminated as it did, and most probably would not have been allowed to continue so long by him as it was by his successors. Whether the prospect of his declining health did not contribute to render the French Government more averse to peace and more unreasonable both in their demands and in their manner of making them, is another

question. The Ministers could only be responsible for their own actions, not for the suspicions which the enemy might choose to entertain either of their dangers or the instability of their power. Had Mr. Fox lived, it is possible and even probable that respect for his character throughout England, France, and Europe, might have induced Napoleon to revert to that spirit of conciliation which the first overture from M. Talleyrand seemed to breathe; but Mr. Fox's successors met with no such friendly disposition, nor even with moderation or forbearance in the councils of the enemy. It is true that the capture of Buenos Ayres (news of which arrived while the negotiation was pending) produced a great sensation in the City; and an unpardonable disposition to prolong the war with hopes of commercial advantages manifested itself on Exchange*,

* The merchants and stock-brokers actually shouted on hearing of the rupture of the negotiation!

"Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra fames!"

and possibly pervaded the minds of persons who had some influence both in Parliament and in the Government. It was obvious that Mr. Windham from habitual hostility to the new order of things in France, Lord Moira and Lord Sidmouth from a love of popularity, or from a fear of facing a clamour, contemplated the probable rupture of the negotiation with less concern than one could have wished. But, with the exception of one instance, such feelings had no perceptible effect on the decisions of the Cabinet; and in that instance it happened very fortunately that the decision of the Cabinet was never acted upon, and could not consequently have any practical effect on the events. The circumstance I allude to was this:—Either immediately after the death of Mr. Fox, or when he was incapable of holding a pen, a dispatch signed by Lord Spencer or Mr. Windham was sent to Lord Lauderdale. That dispatch instructed Lord Lauderdale to put forward some new pretensions founded on the recent success at Buenos Ayres. Such pretensions, and the

ground on which they were placed, were no doubt calculated to throw new obstacles in the way of peace. But before the letter arrived, the negotiation at Paris had taken a new turn; and Lord Lauderdale, glad enough to suppress any unreasonable demands, never urged them on the French Government. They could not, therefore, have had any operation in breaking off the negotiations.

Immediately upon the rupture of them, Napoleon proceeded to Germany. War between France and Prussia was declared. It was determined to send a Minister from hence to ascertain the views of the Prussian Cabinet; to sign peace with that power, if honourable terms could be obtained; and to offer limited succours of money for the support of the war. Lord Henry Petty had incautiously offered to accept that mission. On publick grounds it was scarcely compatible with the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. In private and party policy it was far from being a desirable employment for him. By my persua-

sion he contrived to retract the offer, although it had been mentioned to the King. Lord Morpeth was then proposed. The King answered that he *approved* of that nomination; he had only *agreed* to that of Lord Henry Petty. All negotiation and nearly all intercourse with our mission was shunned by the Prussian Ministers. Lucchesini was so impudent or so unguarded, as to tell Lord Morpeth that "on the issue of the battle then fighting would depend the disposition of Prussia to negotiate with him or not." I have read a very curious account in MS. of the whole of these transactions. It was written by Mr. Gentz, and entitled *The Last Days of the Prussian Monarchy.* Nothing could be worse conducted than their military and diplomatic operations. Their real motive for going to war, was the offer of the French Government to Lord Lauderdale to guarantee the restoration of Hanover to the King of England. Lucchesini termed that offer *une perfidie noire.*

The Duke of Brunswick is said to have

shown on the day of battle as much skill and decision as he betrayed folly and irresolution in all his previous movements. He was a man of prepossessing though rather over-courteous manners, of a very cultivated understanding, and great personal bravery. But the combination of such qualities, even with strong natural parts and vast practical experience, does not constitute greatness, unless a certain energy of mind, which culture has a tendency to efface rather than to bring out, directs the whole. Of this the Duke was a striking example. He was not deficient in sagacity; but his prudence degenerated into timidity, and his knowledge both of his profession and of the world, suggesting to him many views and many apprehensions, embarrassed his judgment and added to the indecision of his character.* That failing rendered his life miserable, and his designs abortive. His end, which seemed fatal to the country which he served, was inglorious to himself.

* Appendix B.

The world forgot in the errors of the previous campaign, and in the consequences of the defeat which those errors had made inevitable, the courage and generalship which he displayed in the field. Lord Morpeth returned with some degree of difficulty through the routed remains of the Prussian army, which was flying in all directions. I regretted that this ill-fated mission had not given him a better opportunity for displaying those qualities and attainments which nothing but his extreme diffidence conceals from publick notice and applause.

When I came into office, I was curious to understand the course of proceeding or interior constitution of our Government. It is vague in the extreme, and often irregular and inconvenient. The Cabinet, which is legally only a Committee of the Privy Council appointed by the King on each distinct occasion, has gradually assumed the character and in some measure the reality of a permanent council, through which advice on all matters of great im-

portance is conveyed to the Crown. But though the necessity of a well-concerted or party Government in a limited monarchy and popular constitution, has generally established the wholesome doctrine, that each and every member of the Cabinet is in some degree responsible for the measures adopted by the Government while he is a member of it, yet there are no precise laws nor rules, nor even any well established or understood usages which mark what measures in each department are or are not to be communicated to the Cabinet. Measures of foreign policy seem indeed more emphatically designated by the history of the origin of this committee in Charles the Second's time, by usage and by reason as the objects of their deliberation. Yet there is nothing but private agreement or party feeling generally, or the directions of the King accidentally, which obliges even a Secretary for Foreign Affairs to consult his colleagues on any of the duties of his office before he takes the King's pleasure upon them. In all Administrations I

believe, and in ours I am sure, his dispatches, his measures, and even his appointments were more generally submitted to the judgment of the Cabinet than those in any other department. When a Cabinet is held at a publick office, it is generally at the Foreign Office. The acts of that office, however, are not invariably nor necessarily laid before the Cabinet; and the Secretary of State at his own discretion advises and completes many without any such consultation. In the other branches of administration, such as the Treasury, the Home Secretaryship, the Chancery, the Admiralty, the discretion is yet larger as to the matters in their respective departments on which the Ministers take the King's pleasure directly or previously consult their colleagues before they advise him. Nomination to places is, for obvious reasons, seldom * submitted to the consideration of a

* It has been much oftener submitted, and hitherto with no bad effect, to Lord Melbourne's Cabinet than to any other of which I have been a member. I write in 1837. But I much question the prudence of such a practice.

Cabinet. Yet by usage, arising out of the necessity of placing a large portion of that species of power in one department, the patronage does *not* always in practice or substance belong to those officers who are the legal channels, and consequently in a strict constitutional sense, the sole legal and ostensible advisers, of the appointment. Thus, for instance, the First Lord of the Treasury actually and constantly takes the King's pleasure on the appointment to many dignities and places, to the warrant, patent, or instrument for which he neither affixes signature nor seal, but which are conferred by the Great Seal, the Privy Seal, and the Signet. Such an undefined distribution of authority, and the want of a distinct line between the jurisdiction of the Cabinet and of the individual Ministers who compose it, as well as between the jurisdiction of their respective offices, is sometimes convenient to the publick service; inasmuch as the person whose abilities qualify him for the largest share of power, may from other circumstances be incapacitated

from holding the office which would technically render him responsible for the exercise of it. On the other hand, the looseness of the obligation of referring the measures of each department to the Cabinet, and the undefined limits of the authority of many of the high offices, afford great scope for intrigue and cabal with the Crown. A favourite might by these means contrive insensibly to separate his interests from those of his colleagues, and at the secret suggestion of a King thwart the measures and defeat the views of a council which, though not technically, is virtually responsible to the publick for the whole conduct of affairs. These remarks are speculations resulting from reflection, not the fruit of experience. No such inconvenience was felt in Lord Grenville's Administration. There did indeed occur one embarrassment from the irregular manner in which according to long usage and practice, the correspondence with the Irish Government had been conducted. The wishes, and even commands of the Government, had for

many years been communicated to the Government of Ireland by private letters from the Secretary of the Home Department to the Lord Lieutenant or his secretary. We could not, in honour or duty, proceed in discussing our project of a limited Catholick Bill with the Irish Government, much less with the Catholicks in Ireland, without bringing the subject in some way before His Majesty's notice. The slovenly and irregular method of transacting business which I have described, prevented its coming, as a matter of course, before his eyes, and consequently compelled us to present it to him in the first instance as a measure of great importance connected with the subject on which his mind was morbidly predisposed to take alarm. I shall have occasion to mention the consequences when I come to relate the transactions which led to the dissolution of our Administration.

The patronage of a Government is not submitted to the consideration of a Cabinet; and as my office, the Privy Seal, gave me

none, I know little of the history of its distribution during the Administration to which I belonged. Nothing in that way was done prejudicial to the publick service; but much that might have strengthened our party and promoted our principles was neglected, especially in the Church. The members, indeed, of that powerful body seemed to conspire against any such project, and to live miraculously for the purpose of baffling the Whigs, whom they hated. Never was there a year in which so little ecclesiastical patronage fell. No sooner were we turned out than canons, deans, and bishops began to sing out their *nunc dimittis*, and seemed to be taken at their word by a Providence who rejoiced in an orthodox and no-Popery Administration. One bishop only died in 1806, and he had become our friend in politicks. This was Dr. Horsley, Bishop of St. David's, a man of coarse and vulgar manners, hot temper, and imprudent conduct; but eminent for his attainments in science, and for his polemical writings, and distinguished for ready and powerful

eloquence, a bold spirit, and a strong mind. His seat on the bench was supplied by a college friend of Lord Grenville, Dr. Moss, and the preferment he vacated was filled up by parsons of hostile politicks, or of too little note to have any. Not one clergyman of talent distinguished for tolerant opinions in Church or State, if we except Mr. Sydney Smith (for whom I procured a living from Lord Erskine), was the better for the only year of power which the Whigs have enjoyed since 1784.

After the rupture of the negotiation for peace, the subjects which chiefly engaged the attention of Government out of Parliament were:

1st. The Dissolution;

2ndly. Foreign Politicks;

3rdly. The investigation into the conduct of the Princess of Wales;

4thly. The Plan of Finance;

5thly. The preparation for the clauses in the Mutiny Bill admitting Catholicks to military offices.

The dissolution was an ill-advised mea-

sure. Nothing but necessity could have justified it. Of that necessity I could form at the time but a very imperfect judgment. My uncle's death and my own accession to the Cabinet were so recent that I acquiesced in the policy and propriety on the authority of my colleagues, and without much inquiry or consideration. It originated, I suspect, in Lord Grenville's ignorance of the state of the House of Commons and his strong propensity at all times to make sure doubly sure. The representations of Mr. Tierney accelerated it. Some political timidity, to which he is very liable, led him to overrate the number and importance of our adversaries; and resentment against Lord Sidmouth made him relish the advice which he gave with the real motive of strengthening the Government. The Parliament had been chosen under Lord Sidmouth's Administration. The dismissal of it threatened to be fatal to his political importance. He felt it to be a blow; but he behaved well. He acquiesced in the Cabinet, and as I believe neither hinted a dislike

nor encouraged a murmur against the measure in the closet. The King wanted no prompter to quicken his sagacity in discerning the effect of a dissolution at that time. There is reason to suspect that he consulted the ex-Ministers upon it; but their dispersion in different parts of the country, and a temporary relinquishment of the measure, which arose from a mistaken calculation of the pressure for money, prevented him from taking further steps, and spared the Administration till an opportunity for dismissing them occurred better suited to the views of His Majesty and more injurious to their popularity in the country. If Parliament was dissolved for ministerial convenience, full advantage was not taken of the measure. The general election was very ill managed by the Government. In many instances no ministerial candidates were found; in others, not sufficient preference was shown to tried friends over their sunshine supporters who professed attachment to *the Ministry*, but who never felt, and scarcely affected, ad-

herence to our party under any other denomination. The King, who throughout his reign had furnished every treasury with 12,000*l.* to defray election expenses on a dissolution, withheld that unconstitutional assistance from the Administration of 1806. Yet, such is the infatuation bred by the atmosphere of a Court! some of our friends then flattered themselves that we were not obnoxious to the King, and have since persisted in the foolish opinion that nothing but our own conduct gave him an inclination to change his government.

The consequences of sacrificing a Parliament to the mere convenience of a Ministry by a premature dissolution, were very sensibly felt when, in the course of a few months, our conduct was retorted upon us as a precedent and justification for the yet more violent but more necessary dissolution of 1807, which was a fatal blow to our party, and fixed our enemies in power.

Our transactions with foreign states during the winter of 1806 were not very

interesting. The personal qualities of Mr. Adair rendered him peculiarly acceptable to the Court of Vienna; and we recommended through him an amicable understanding between Russia and Austria. We studiously disclaimed, however, all disposition to *induce* the latter power to declare war by subsidies. Our policy was to succour those states who would voluntarily resist the power of France, but not to bribe them to engage in the contest. We cautioned Mr. Adair, in speaking of such succours as we could afford in case Austria took part against France, not to represent them as motives for her declaration. The quarrel, we said, must be her own, the cause must be her own, and if she were not, from a sense of her own wrongs and dangers, prepared to make a national war against France, it was neither our interest nor our wish to engage her in hostilities.

In Sicily, the misgovernment of the Court was daily endangering our interests. The Queen, as she advanced in years, grew more ungovernable in her revenge, and not

more moderate in the indulgence of other passions. The accounts we received from thence made Lord Ellenborough, after his coarse fashion, observe that "Our Sicilian alliance did nothing but compel us to spend 600,000*l.* per annum to keep up a *brothel* at Palermo." Sir William Drummond, who had contrived to succeed General Fox at that Court, very properly suspended both the subsidy and the execution of the projected treaty till measures should be devised for conciliating the people, and for directing the resources of the country to its own defence and to other objects of the alliance. It was determined to authorize him to stop the subsidies altogether, and to recal our troops; and he was instructed to countenance the disaffected party by strong remonstrances, and by bringing the British army nearer the capital. He was even empowered to assist in removing the Queen's favourites from the Council, and in prevailing on the Queen herself to withdraw from the island. Lord Howick, fatigued with business, employed me to write some of his dispatches.

Among them was the draft of these instructions to Sir William Drummond. The language was decisive enough, but Lord Howick softened it a little before it was submitted to the Cabinet, and the Cabinet left it rather milder than they found it. It was on the point of being sent when the dissolution of the Ministry on other grounds became unavoidable. Lord Howick thought it wrong to take so very decisive a step at the very eve of leaving his office. He therefore communicated the substance of these instructions to his successor, and left the adoption of them entirely to his discretion. Mr. Canning was startled at the boldness of the measure, but expressed himself satisfied with it: he did not, however, act up to that opinion. Sir William Drummond, conceiving the new Ministry averse to an open breach with the Queen of Naples, or glad possibly to evade a situation where other qualities besides temper and ingenuity might be required, altered the tone of his dispatches. Recourse was had to a system of temporizing, which was

corrected some years afterwards at the instance, I think, of Lord William Bentinck with a worse grace and with less advantage by Lord Wellesley or Lord Castlereagh.

I was more ostensibly employed in our negotiations with the United States of North America. I was named Joint Commissioner with Lord Auckland to negotiate with Mr. Monroe and Mr. Pinkney. These gentlemen had been sent to demand satisfaction for numerous captures made in virtue of instructions from our Admiralty, which the Government of the United States contended to be illegal. They had arisen from a principle enforced in a popular but intemperate pamphlet of Mr. Stephen, entitled "War in Disguise," adopted in some measure by the decrees of our Court of Admiralty, and highly relished by our Navy, to whom it opened unexpected sources of wealth, or rather plunder. The rule of 1756, which, though never actually sanctioned by other nations, England has always considered as publick law, condemns by inference, but not *eo nomine*, any neutral

which carries produce from an enemy's colony directly to Europe. The Americans had been in the habit of conveying the produce of French and Spanish islands in the first instance to some port in the United States, and afterwards to France, Holland, and Germany. Mr. Stephen passionately contended that such voyages were not *bonâ fide* circuitous voyages, but constituted a direct trade from Martinique to France; and that such direct trade not being permitted during peace by the mother country, it became during war an infraction of the rule of 1756, and might be lawfully intercepted by a belligerent. Without notice or explanation, an order for detaining all neutrals engaged in such a commerce was suddenly issued; and a prodigious number of Americans were brought into our ports by His Majesty's cruizers in the summer and autumn of 1805. The principle of these seizures was not likely to be very readily admitted by any independent power whose subjects had suffered by the application of it. The sudden and peremptory manner of

enforcing it was yet more offensive, and aggravated that hostile feeling which long mismanagement on our part, and some folly on theirs, had created in the leading party in North America. Mr. Monroe and Mr. Pinkney were instructed to insist on an explanation upon this important point, on some regulation of the impressment of British seamen found in American merchant vessels, on the right and practice of searching for them at sea, and on many other inferior but difficult subjects. When, however, the death of Mr. Pitt was known, the spirit, though not the substance, of their instructions was softened, and the mission was authorized to assume a more conciliatory tone than their original instructions seemed to breathe. The two gentlemen were empowered to negotiate and conclude a treaty of commerce which should regulate all disputed points, and place the two countries permanently on a more amicable footing. We found the two American Commissioners fair, explicit, frank, and intelligent. Mr. Monroe (afterwards President) was a sin-

cere republican, who during the Revolution in France had imbibed a strong predilection for that country, and no slight aversion to this. But he had candour and principle. A nearer view of the Consular and Imperial Government of France and of our Constitution in England, converted him from both these opinions. "I find," said he to me, "your Monarchy more republican than monarchical, and the French Republick infinitely more monarchical than your Monarchy." He was plain in his manners and somewhat slow in his apprehension; but he was a diligent, earnest, sensible, and even profound man. His colleague*, who had been partly educated in England and was a lawyer by profession, had more of the forms and readiness of business, and greater knowledge and cultivation of mind; but perhaps his opinions were neither so firmly rooted nor so deeply considered as those of Mr. Monroe. Throughout our ne-

* Mr. Pinkney. He died some few years afterwards in great practice as a lawyer.

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gotiation they were conciliatory, both in form and in substance. They exceeded their instructions by signing a treaty which left the article of impressment unsettled. My colleague and I took credit to ourselves for having convinced them of the extreme difficulty of the subject, arising from the impossibility of our allowing seamen to withdraw themselves from our service during war, and from the inefficacy of all the regulations which they had been enabled to propose for preventing their entering into American ships. They, on the other hand, persuaded us that they were themselves sincere in wishing to prevent it; and we saw no reason for suspecting that the Government of the United States was less so. But though they professed, and I believe felt, a strong wish to enforce such a provision, they did not convince us that they had the power or means of enforcing it. There was, consequently, no article in the treaty upon the subject. Upon this omission and upon other more frivolous pretexts, but with the real purpose and effect of de-

feating Mr. Monroe's views on the Presidentship, Mr. Jefferson refused to ratify a treaty which would have secured his countrymen from all further vexations, and prevented a war between two nations whose habits, language, and interests should unite them in perpetual alliance and good fellowship.

I had an opportunity during this negotiation of observing the influence of situation over men's opinions. The atmosphere of the Admiralty made those who breathed it shudder at everything like concessions to the Americans; while the anxiety to avoid war and to enlarge our resources by commerce so natural in the Treasury, softened natures otherwise less yielding, and led them to listen with favour to every conciliatory expedient.

Of our expeditions I shall say little. They were not successful, and with the aid of much clamour were condemned by the publick voice as ill-concerted in policy and unjust in principle.

Those to the Dardanelles and to Egypt* are connected with the views of Russia on Turkey, and an intricate series of negotiations and transactions relating to Moldavia and Walachia. To state them at length and to adduce the documents which substantiate the facts, would be tedious. Suffice it to observe that the French ambassador at Constantinople succeeded in instigating the Turks to break their engagements with Russia, and that Russia, glad of the pretext, proceeded to seize Moldavia and Walachia. That measure, though avowedly taken in hostility to a power allied to France, and under her influence, gave perhaps yet more serious alarm and umbrage to Austria. It was our endeavour, as obviously the interest of England, to effect a union between Austria and Russia, and a reconciliation between Russia and the Porte. We had a right under the treaties to insist on the restoration of the Hospodars, whom the Turks had

* Appendix C. 1 and 2.

dispossessed of Moldavia and Walachia. We had also a right to insist on the passage of Russian men-of-war through the Canal of Constantinople. We exacted in return from Russia the evacuation of the provinces on the restoration of the Hospodars. It was clear, however, that no arrangement would be relied on unless we could persuade or terrify the Divan into dismissing the French ambassador from Constantinople. He had artfully embroiled Russia and Turkey; but the readiness with which Russia took up a quarrel on which she could engraft her projects of aggrandizement, alarmed Austria, and disposed us to labour yet more earnestly to procure her satisfaction in all just demands, and thereby to deprive her of all pretexts for prosecuting those ambitious designs of which we suspected her. Peace, such as would separate the Porte from France, enable Russia to direct her exertions westward, and allay the apprehensions felt by Austria of her views in the East, was our chief and only object. To attain it, a fleet adequate to the support

of our demands was absolutely necessary. A squadron was consequently placed at the disposal of Mr. Arbuthnot, who was instructed to use it for the purposes of intimidation, and to authorize the commencement of hostilities if satisfaction were not immediately given. That gentleman left Constantinople unexpectedly before the fleet destined to countenance and enforce his negotiations had arrived. It assumed consequently the appearance of a mere military enterprize, not of a force destined to enforce the negotiation of the ambassador by placing before the eyes of the Sultan an English fleet ready and able to bombard his capital. Though the departure of Mr. Arbuthnot had given the Porte full notice of approaching hostilities, our squadron succeeded in silencing the fortresses, and sailed up to Constantinople. Nothing but the bad judgment of the commander prevented this squadron from anchoring under the walls of the seraglio, from whence it could have dictated a treaty in the terms demanded without difficulty or danger.

The Sultan had already signified to General Sebastiani that he could not expose his capital to destruction for the sake of Napoleon. He had actually sent that ambassador his passports, and urged him to lose no time in using them, when the unexpected manœuvre of our fleet, which bore away to the Prince's islands, and was there wind-bound for twelve days, relieved the apprehensions of the Porte, confirmed the triumph of the French, and compelled Sir Thomas Duckworth to return ingloriously and with some peril through the Dardanelles. Thus the abrupt departure of Mr. Arbuthnot from Constantinople (which, if not directly contrary to his instructions, was certainly not in pursuance of them), and Sir Thomas Duckworth's unaccountable preference of a distant anchorage to that which would have given him the command of the city and the seraglio, were the real causes why that expedition failed in accomplishing its purpose. It never was intended to reduce Constantinople or to take possession of the forts. Our object was to intimidate the

Sultan into a compliance with our demands in favour of Russia, and to induce him to dismiss the French ambassador General Sebastiani, who by his intrigues had embroiled the Porte with our ally. Both these objects were attainable; and had Mr. Arbuthnot remained at Constantinople till our fleet arrived to enforce his demands, or had the fleet, when it did arrive, anchored close to the seraglio and the city, then in an indefensible state, it is reasonable to believe that they would have been attained. The Ministers, it is true, were accused both at home and abroad of abandoning the interests of Russia; yet the expedition was undertaken solely to support them. The force employed was in some speeches and pamphlets represented as inadequate to its object; yet it was larger than Mr. Arbuthnot had required; it was what Lord Collingwood deemed necessary and proper, and Sir Thomas Duckworth himself never attributed his failure to the inadequacy of his force. Mr. Arbuthnot had the candour to acknowledge in the House of Commons,

when connected with a hostile Administration, that the force allotted to the expedition was fully adequate to the purposes intended; and Mr. Adair, subsequently acquainted with all the transactions and fresh from the spot, confirmed his statement unequivocally. Mr. Canning himself acknowledged to Lord Howick in private, that, on reading his despatches, he had been surprised to find the case so good for the late Ministry, and his (Lord Howick's) instructions so clear and so reasonable, though so ill observed and executed. He had not, however, the magnanimity to bear this testimony to his predecessor's conduct in publick, nor even the candour or justice to check in others or refrain himself from some sneers at that expedition. The attack on Egypt was a branch of the same measure. The conditional orders commanding it applied to a case which those who issued them could not foresee. Mr. Arbuthnot had been directed on the arrival of the fleet, if his demands were not granted, to leave Constantinople, and to declare war;

and the admirals and generals to fit out the expedition to Egypt and to proceed to its destination immediately on hearing of Mr. Arbuthnot's departure from Constantinople. That gentleman unfortunately left Constantinople without any declaration of war, and before Sir Thomas Duckworth had arrived with his fleet. This was a contingency never contemplated by the Ministers at home, and certainly exposed the expedition to censures on the score of violation of the laws of nations, to which, had it been preceded by the events supposed by the Government at home, it would not have been liable. The resident Consul at Alexandria contributed not a little to the failure of that expedition by false information; and the officer commanding the detachment showed no talents in the execution of his duty. It is always invidious to ascribe miscarriages to the misconduct of naval or military officers, or to subordinate agents employed at a distance. Moreover, ere the news of these failures arrived, we were out of power; and those who succeeded us were

glad to impute every disaster to the improvidence or incapacity of their predecessors, rather than to any fault in the execution of our plans.

Our expeditions to South America were not more fortunate in their issue. They were exposed to much animadversion, and in fact deserved it more than those I have explained above. Some allowance should indeed be made for the untoward circumstances into which the Ministry were forced by the unauthorized enterprizes of Sir Home Popham; and it should always be recollected that great hazards must be run in all conditional orders relating to complicated movements of fleets and troops at a distance. These considerations should mitigate the sentence of the publick and posterity. But it must be acknowledged that the expeditions to Spanish America in 1806 and 1807 were neither judiciously conceived nor expedited with the vigour and dispatch which such undertakings require. The transitory success of Sir Home Popham's unjustifiable attack on Buenos

Ayres, undertaken and executed without any orders from home, and the eager expectations raised by his yet more unjustifiable invitation to all our trading towns to commence a commercial intercourse with his conquests, rendered it odious and indeed nearly impossible, at the moment of breaking off a negotiation for peace, to relinquish the acquisitions which he had made without any effort to maintain or improve them. Mr. Windham, though he plumed himself on his disdain of all popular clamour, had greatly heated his imagination with the prospect of indemnifying ourselves in the New World for the disappointments which we had sustained in the Old. Lord Sidmouth, Lord Moira, and others, not excepting entirely Lord Grenville himself, were anxious to court the commercial interest by opening new sources for their adventures; and they were not insensible to the censures lavished already on our defensive system of warfare, which they foresaw would be much augmented and aggravated if Sir Home Popham's expedition were to fail for want of

further support from home. Yet the same persons, and Lord Grenville more especially, were averse to any measure which should pledge Great Britain to separate the colonies of Spain from the mother country. Such an undertaking would, they apprehended, be an insurmountable obstacle to peace; and, by involving us in an extensive project, would call for exertions that would yet further exhaust our diminished resources.

With these views of cautious policy many considerations of humanity, and some, perhaps, of prejudice in favour of established power, combined. A revolution in a country inhabited by such a variety of races and colours, all animated with feelings of jealousy and resentment to one another, and all inexperienced and ignorant of the government of mankind, would lead, it was urged, to interminable civil wars, massacres, and outrages, which would convert the whole continent of South America into a scene of confusion, plunder, and carnage. Mr. Windham whimsically enough,

though the patron of such alarms in Europe, was the only person in the Cabinet on whom such apprehensions seemed to make no impression whatever; while Lord Howick, by some hints which he dropped and by the line of policy which he recommended, gave some countenance to hopes of counter-revolutionary movements in France, and betrayed some predilection for a war on the continent of Europe. He was earnest in pressing the Government to husband our resources and preserve our armies for such occasions as the events in Europe might present. In conformity with these views, and in the true spirit of his direct, bold, and honourable character, he urged the immediate recall of the troops who had accompanied Sir Home Popham, and was ready and even eager to face all clamour on the subject. When the Cabinet determined to reinforce the troops at Buenos Ayres, Lord Howick (Earl Grey) recorded his opinion against the measure in a separate minute. No division nor dissension among us ensued: but the policy

adopted did partake of the irresolute and discordant opinions of the Council. We should either have abandoned all projects on Spanish America, or made the liberation of those colonies a main object of our war. We did neither. We sent succours to our army at Buenos Ayres, and we fitted out two very small expeditions with eventual instructions where and how to act. The force was quite inadequate to a conquest; and our language was not sufficiently explicit to induce the inhabitants to throw off the yoke of Spain. It is not surprizing that such ill-concerted and irresolute policy met with no success. The faults committed by our Administration did not end here. Mr. Windham was unpardonably remiss in drawing up his instructions and dispatching the expedition. In consequence of his procrastination and an unnecessary journey to Norfolk, the ships lost their wind and were detained some weeks at Falmouth. The instructions after all were either written or at least completed, during

his absence by one of the other Secretaries of State, and he signed them without correcting those passages in them which he lamented and disapproved. He was at least unlucky in his recommendation of General Whitlock. Anxious as he was about South American projects, he did not select this officer from any knowledge of his qualifications or confidence in his skill, but from motives of convenience. Whitlock had been Inspector-General. In that capacity he had courted the Duke of York, and offended Mr. Windham by opposing the favourite project of the latter for enlisting for a term of years, and not for life. To give that wise and recent measure a fair chance, Mr. Windham was desirous to appoint an Inspector-General who was friendly to its success. He very judiciously designed Lord Rosslyn for the successor of General Whitlock; but he somewhat hastily, in order to make way for Lord Rosslyn, suggested or consented to the appointment of General Whitlock to a distant and important command. The

expedition was destined to *Valparaiso*. It was fortunately detained by subsequent events at Buenos Ayres; and the worst part of our plan was thus concealed from the knowledge, and escaped the censure, of the publick.

Having thus impartially recorded the errors of that period, I must add that other more extensive and better-considered expeditions to Spanish America were at the same time in contemplation. If the appointment of General Whitlock was unlucky, Lord Grenville should have the credit of having selected Sir Arthur Wellesley, an officer not high in rank, for the command of an important expedition then fitting out against Mexico. The speedy and sudden termination of his Ministry deprived him of the satisfaction of opening a career of success to his private friend, and of the glory of entrusting an English army to one of the most brilliant generals whom our country has produced. Sir Arthur Wellesley was destined to rise through victory to

celebrity and honours in Old, not in New Spain; for though the Mexican expedition was resumed by the Ministers who succeeded us soon after the affair at Copenhagen, the preparations making for that purpose at Cork and elsewhere, were suddenly diverted to Portugal by the events in the Peninsula. The same commander had been retained; and Sir Arthur Wellesley began his career of glory by a victory in the field, and a blunder in the Convention of Cintra, in the ensuing year.

The proceedings relating to the Princess of Wales were very perplexing to the Administration of Lord Grenville; and the sensation produced by them proved not less injurious to the party, when upon various subsequent occasions the objections of Her Royal Highness and of her advisers, both to the form and substance of them, were divulged, and openly and severely canvassed by the publick. Those disclosures, and especially the publication in 1813, called "The Book," render much that was considered as secret and curious at the time

unnecessary to be repeated in such notes and memoirs as I am now, at the distance of some years, transcribing and revising. The subsequent transactions divest the previous inquiries into her behaviour of much of that interest which scandal and gossip relating to personages of high station very often excite. The incidents which transpired in such inquiries will no doubt have some weight on the minds of impartial historians, in weighing the probability or improbability of the charges subsequently brought against the same personage. The knowledge that such an inquiry was established did unquestionably even in the outset exasperate the people against the Prince, and expose the Ministry who entertained it to much suspicion and obloquy. Yet all the Ministers except Mr. Windham, supposed that the nature of the facts disclosed in the inquiry, if made publick, would in this prudish country divert the popular wrath from the Prince to the Princess; and they not unreasonably inferred from that very

natural speculation that her advisers would be more careful to suppress than to publish what was so inaptly termed "the delicate investigation." The event belied both these expectations. The publications, whether mutilated or entire, all originated with the official advisers, or at least with the warm partizans of the Princess; and the appearances of levity (to use the very mildest phrase), far from shocking the austerity of the English publick, seemed to endear her to the populace, and certainly strengthened the prejudices and inflamed the animosity of all classes against her husband. A share of the odium fell on all who either conducted or sanctioned any inquiry at the Prince's request or instigation. And yet, whatever may be thought of the treatment to which she was exposed on her arrival in England, or of the malignity, and possibly the falsehood, of some of the charges subsequently brought against her, or of the somewhat vindictive prosecution of her when Queen,—she was at best a strange woman, and a very sorry and uninteresting

heroine. She had, they say, some talent, some pleasantry, some good-humour, and great spirit and courage. But she was utterly destitute of all female delicacy, and exhibited in the whole course of the transactions relating to herself very little feeling for anybody, and very little regard for honour or truth, or even for the interests of those who were devoted to her, whether the people in the aggregate, or the individuals who enthusiastically espoused her cause. She avowed her dislike of many; she scarcely concealed her contempt for all. In short, to speak plainly, if not mad, she was a very worthless woman.

The events preceding and connected with her ill-starred marriage, may serve in some points to guide the judgment, or at least to gratify the curiosity, of such as retain any interest about the various proceedings afterwards instituted against her, or the comparative guilt of her and her husband, in the relation in which they stood one to the other. For that reason among others, I shall relate nearly all the particulars

reported to me which bear on the subject, together with the authorities from which I derive them. I would on this topick rather incur the reproach of prolixity, than that of any partial suppression of facts; though I am conscious that, in detailing all that I have heard and believe, a more accurate knowledge of dates than I have been able to obtain may seem necessary to reconcile some apparent contradictions which a careful reader may think that he discerns in my narrative or my inferences. Persons most intimate at Carlton House, as well as many casual but attentive observers, have always assured me that the Prince of Wales was throughout the transactions of 1795, and up to the very day of its celebration, averse to the marriage. His behaviour even at that ceremony, as well as the significant looks and whispers of some of his household and attendants, confirmed the suspicion. He confessed to the Duke of Bedford *, who

* Extract of a letter from John, Duke of Bedford, dated Woburn Abbey, August 8. 1836: — "My brother was one of the two unmarried Dukes who sup-

attended, that he had swallowed several glasses of brandy to enable him to go through the ceremony; and the duke observed, in relating the fact, that he had taken so many, that it had nearly disqualified him from doing so: he (the duke) could scarcely support him from falling. This manifest repugnance to the marriage was attributed by many at the time to remorse at the recollection of a similar ceremony, which had passed between him and Mrs. Fitzherbert. The subsequent conduct of all the parties, and the treatment of Mrs. Fitzherbert by all branches of the royal family, even when separated from the Prince, have long since confirmed the suspicion. In truth, that there was such a ceremony is *now* (I transcribe my narrative in 1836)

ported the Prince at the ceremony, and he had need of his support; for my brother told me the Prince was so drunk that he could scarcely support him from falling. He told my brother he had drunk several glasses of brandy to enable him to go through the ceremony. There is no doubt but it was a *compulsory* marriage."

not matter of conjecture or inference, but of history. Documents proving it (long in the possession of Mrs. Fitzherbert's family), have been since June, 1833, actually deposited by agreement between the executors of George IV. (the Duke of Wellington and Sir William Knighton), and the nominees of Mrs. Fitzherbert (Lord Albemarle and Lord Stourton), at Coutts's bank, in a sealed box bearing a superscription of "The property of the Earl of Albemarle: but not to be opened by him without apprizing the Duke of Wellington," or words to that purport.

It is however true that Mr. Fox distinctly denied in Parliament that any marriage had taken place. My readers, therefore, may reasonably expect some explanation of that circumstance. If I attempt to satisfy their curiosity, they must not infer any admission on my part, that any vindication of the sincerity of Mr. Fox in making that declaration, is necessary; for nobody in his senses, I presume, ever called it in question. To suppose that a man of his understanding

and honour would, in his place in Parliament, have made such declaration unless he had been thoroughly persuaded of its truth, would be absurd and preposterous in the extreme: and to believe that he entertained such persuasion without positive and direct endeavours of the Prince to produce it in his mind, would be scarcely less so, especially in the judgment of those who knew his habitual accuracy and extreme caution in any statement of facts in publick. It is indeed manifest that the assurances from the Prince contained in the following correspondence were never withdrawn; and it is more than probable, and indeed morally certain, though not susceptible of demonstration by documentary proof, that they had been repeatedly renewed in the fifteen months which elapsed between December, 1785, and the day when he made that declaration in the House of Commons. The circumstances which preceded and led to the two letters which I transcribe were as follows: — In 1784 or early in 1785, the Prince of Wales was so

deeply enamoured of Mrs. Fitzherbert that he was ready to make any sacrifice to obtain from that lady favours which she either from indifference or scruple persisted in refusing him. He did not conceal his passion, nor his despair at her leaving England for the Continent. Mrs. Fox, then Mrs. Armitstead, who was living at St. Anne's, has repeatedly assured me that he came down thither more than once to converse with her and Mr. Fox on the subject, that he cried by the hour, that he testified the sincerity and violence of his passion and his despair by the most extravagant expressions and actions, rolling on the floor, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, falling into hystericks, and swearing that he would abandon the country, forego the crown, sell his jewels and plate, and scrape together a competence to fly with the object of his affections to America. Though I cannot ascertain the exact date of these visits and conversations, I infer from circumstances, that they occurred during the excursion of Mrs. Fitzherbert on the Continent, from

whence she returned in the autumn or winter of 1785. Whether that return was purely casual, or in compliance with earnest solicitations from the Prince, does not appear from any evidence within my reach; but it was soon obvious to the world that for some reason or other the lady was no longer so obdurate as her lover had hitherto represented and found her; and it was not long before a strong rumour, founded on grounds more or less plausible, prevailed, that a ceremony or the promise of one had overcome her scruples. It was on this rumour reaching Mr. Fox's ears that the following correspondence took place.

"December 10. 1785.

"SIR,

"I hope your Royal Highness does me the justice to believe that it is with the utmost reluctance that I trouble you with my opinion unasked at any time, much more so upon a subject where it may not be agreeable to your wishes. I am sure

that nothing could ever make me take this liberty, but the condescension which you have honoured me with upon so many occasions, and the zealous and grateful attachment that I feel for your Royal Highness, and which makes me run the risk even of displeasing you for the purpose of doing you a real service.

"I was told just before I left town yesterday, that Mrs. Fitzherbert was arrived; and if I had heard only this, I should have felt the most unfeigned joy at an event which I knew would contribute so much to your Royal Highness's satisfaction: but I was told at the same time, that from a variety of circumstances which had been observed and put together, there was reason to suppose that you were going to take the very desperate step (pardon the expression) of marrying her at this moment. If such an idea be really in your mind, and it be not now too late, for God's sake let me call your attention to some considerations which my attachment to your Royal Highness, and the real concern which I

take in whatever relates to your interest, have suggested to me, and which may possibly have the more weight with you when you perceive that Mrs. Fitzherbert is equally interested in most of them with yourself. In the first place, you are aware that a marriage with a Catholick throws the Prince contracting such marriage out of the succession of the crown. Now, what change may have happened in Mrs. Fitzherbert's sentiments upon religious matters I know not; but I do not understand that any publick profession of change has been made: and surely, Sir, this is not a matter to be trifled with; and your Royal Highness must excuse the extreme freedom with which I write. If there should be a doubt about her previous conversion, consider the circumstances in which you stand. The King not feeling for you as a father ought, the Duke of York professedly his favourite, and likely to be married agreeably to the King's wishes; the nation full of its old prejudices against Catholicks, and justly dreading all disputes about succession; in

all these circumstances your enemies might take such advantage as I shudder to think of; and though your generosity might think no sacrifice too great to be made to a person whom you love so entirely, consider what her reflections must be in such an event, and how impossible it would be for her ever to forgive herself. I have stated this danger upon the supposition that the marriage would be a real one: but your Royal Highness knows as well as I, that according to the present laws of the country it *cannot;* and I need not point out to your good sense what a source of uneasiness it must be to you, to her, and above all to the nation, to have it a matter of dispute and discussion, whether the Prince of Wales is or is not married. All speculations on the feelings of the publick are uncertain; but I doubt much whether an uncertainty of this kind, by keeping men's minds in perpetual agitation upon a matter of this moment, might not cause a greater ferment than any other possible situation. If there should be children from the marriage, I need not say how

much the uneasiness as well of yourselves as of the nation, must be aggravated. If anything could add to the weight of these considerations, it is the impossibility of remedying the mischiefs I have alluded to; for if your Royal Highness should think proper when you are twenty-five years old, to notify to Parliament your intention to marry (by which means *alone* a *legal* marriage can be contracted), in what manner can it be notified? If the previous marriage is mentioned or owned, will it not be said that you have set at defiance the laws of your country; and that you now come to Parliament for a sanction for what you have already done in contempt of it? If there are children, will it not be said that we must look for future applications to legitimate them, and consequently be liable to disputes for the succession between the eldest son, and the eldest son after the legal marriage? And will not the entire annulling the whole marriage be suggested as the most secure way of preventing all such

disputes? If the marriage is not mentioned to Parliament, but yet is known to have been solemnized, as it certainly will be known if it takes place, these are the consequences:—First, that at all events any child born in the interim is immediately illegitimated; and next, that arguments will be drawn from the circumstances of the concealed marriage against the publick one. It will be said, that a woman who has lived with you as your wife without being so, is not fit to be Queen of England; and thus the very thing that is done for the sake of her reputation will be used against it: and what would make this worse would be, the marriage being known (though not officially communicated to Parliament), it would be impossible to deny the assertion; whereas, if there was no marriage, I conclude your intercourse would be carried on as it ought, in so private a way as to make it wholly inconsistent with decency or propriety for any one in publick to hazard such a suggestion. If, in consequence of your notification, steps should be taken in Par-

liament, and an Act passed (which, considering the present state of the power of the King and Ministry, is more than probable) to prevent your marriage, you will be reduced to the most difficult of all dilemmas with respect to the footing upon which your marriage is to stand for the future; and your children will be born to pretensions which must make their situation unhappy, if not dangerous. These situations appear to me of all others the most to be pitied; and the more so because the more indications persons born in such circumstances give of spirit, talents, or anything that is good, the more will they be suspected and oppressed, and the more will they regret the being deprived of what they must naturally think themselves entitled to. I could mention many other considerations upon this business, if I did not think those I have stated of so much importance, that smaller ones would divert your attention from them rather than add to their weight. That I have written with a freedom which

on any other occasion would be unbecoming, I readily confess; and nothing would have induced me to do it, but a deep sense of my duty to a Prince who has honoured me with so much of his confidence, and who would have but an ill return for all his favours and goodness to me, if I were to avoid speaking truth to him, however disagreeable, at so critical a juncture. The sum of my humble advice, nay, of my most earnest entreaty, is this—that your Royal Highness would not think of marrying till you can marry legally. When that time comes, you must judge for yourself; and no doubt you will take into consideration, both what is due to private honour and your publick station. In the meanwhile, a mock marriage (for it can be no other) is neither honourable for any of the parties, nor, with respect to your Royal Highness, even safe. This appears so clear to me, that, if I were Mrs. Fitzherbert's father or brother, I would advise her not by any means to agree to it, and to prefer any other species of connection with you

to one leading to so much misery and mischief.

"It is high time I should finish this very long and, perhaps your Royal Highness will think, ill-timed letter; but such as it is it is dictated by pure zeal and attachment to your Royal Highness. With respect to Mrs. Fitzherbert, she is a person with whom I have scarcely the honour of being acquainted, but I hear from everybody that her character is irreproachable and her manners most amiable. Your Royal Highness knows, too, that I have not in my mind the same objection to intermarriages with Princes and subjects which many have. But under the present circumstances a marriage at present appears to me to be the most desperate measure for all parties concerned that their worst enemies could have suggested."

The above rough draft* of a letter which

* It is possible, and even probable, that some phrases in the rough copy were corrected, but that

though without signature is all, excepting the date, in Mr. Fox's own handwriting, was found among his papers, together with the following answer written, dated, and signed by the Prince of Wales.

" My dear Charles,

" Your letter of last night afforded me more true satisfaction than I can find words to express; as it is an additional proof to me (which I assure you I did not want) of your having that true regard and affection for me which it is not only the wish but the ambition of my life to merit. Make yourself easy, my dear friend. Believe me, the world will now soon be convinced that there not only is, but never was any grounds for these reports, which of late have been so malevolently circulated. I have not seen you since the apostacy of Eden. I think it ought to have the same effect upon

such was the substance of the letter received and answered by the Prince of Wales in December, 1785, there can be no question.

all our friends that it has upon me, I mean the linking us closer to each other; and I believe you will easily believe these to be my sentiments; for you are perfectly well acquainted with my ways of thinking upon these sort of subjects. When I say my ways of thinking, I think I had better say my old maxim, which I ever intend to adhere to; I mean that of swimming or sinking with my friends. I have not time to add much more, except just to say that I believe I shall meet you at dinner at Bushy on Tuesday; and to desire you to believe me at all times, my dear Charles, most affectionately yours.

(Signed) "George P."

"Carlton House,
Sunday morning, 2 o'clock,
December 11th, 1785."

There is the strongest reason to suppose that neither the above correspondence nor the subsequent assurances, in whatever shape they were conveyed, were ever acknowledged to Mrs. Fitzherbert by the

Prince. That lady, by her conduct on the denial and in her subsequent account of those transactions, has uniformly implied, first, that a ceremony had taken place previous to Mr. Fox's denial, in which she is indisputably correct; and secondly, that Mr. Fox had no authority to deny the marriage in the way he did, which false impression she no doubt received from the Prince, who was naturally though weakly ashamed to avow his own disregard of truth by insinuating a want of accuracy, if not of veracity, in another. Mrs. Fitzherbert at the time did not disguise her resentment. She would not speak to Mr. Fox. There can be little doubt that she urged the Prince to take some step to procure a publick disavowal of a declaration which he knew to be false, and had, according to all probability, assured her was not authorized by him. The Prince certainly not only abstained from remonstrance or correction of the statement to Mr. Fox himself, but never ventured to hint to him that he had exceeded his authority, or even been indiscreet

in alleging it. But he spoke in some such strain to others; and he actually sent the next morning for Mr. Grey (Lord Howick and Earl Grey), who was then in high favour with him, and after much preamble, and pacing in a hurried manner about the room, exclaimed, "Charles" (he always so called Mr. Fox) "certainly went too far last night. You, my dear Grey, shall explain it:" and then in distinct terms (as Grey has *since the Prince's death* assured me), though with prodigious agitation, owned that a ceremony had taken place. Mr. Grey observed that Mr. Fox must unquestionably suppose that he had authority for *all* he said; and that if there had been any mistake, it could only be rectified by his Royal Highness speaking to Mr. Fox himself, and setting him right on such matters as had been misunderstood between them. "No other person can," he added, "be employed without questioning Mr. Fox's veracity, which nobody I presume is prepared to do." This answer chagrined, disappointed, and agitated the Prince exceedingly; and after

some exclamations of annoyance he threw himself on a sofa, muttering, "Well, then, Sheridan must say something." Accordingly Mr. Sheridan did come down to the House and utter some unintelligible sentimental trash about female delicacy, which implied the displeasure of the Prince and still more of Mrs. Fitzherbert at what had passed in Parliament, but did not directly or even remotely insinuate that what Mr. Fox had spoken was either beyond or without the authority of the Prince of Wales. That Mr. Fox subsequently suspected or rather knew that some ceremony had taken place, I cannot doubt; but never having spoken to him on the subject, I cannot assert it of my own knowledge. The exact date and circumstances of that ceremony have not come to my knowledge, but the account given of some part of the transaction by Mrs. Fitzherbert herself to a friend of mine, a man of strict veracity, is curious and I believe correct. It was at the Prince's own earnest and repeated solicitations, not at Mrs. Fitzherbert's request,

that any ceremony was resorted to. She knew it to be invalid in law; she thought it nonsense, and told the Prince so. In proof that such had been her uniform opinion, she adduced a very striking circumstance — namely, that no ceremony by a Roman Catholick priest took place at all, the most obvious method of allaying her scruples, had she had any. I believe therefore she spoke with truth when she frankly owned "that she had given herself up to him, exacted no conditions, trusted to his honour; and set no value on the ceremony which he insisted on having solemnized." It was performed by an English clergyman. A certificate was signed by him and attested by two witnesses, both, I believe, Catholick gentlemen, and one a near relation of Mrs. Fitzherbert, Mr. Errington. Mrs. Fitzherbert, from mixed feelings of fear and generosity, tore off the names of the witnesses at some subsequent period, lest they should by possibility be involved in any legal penalties for being present at an illegal transaction. Before George the

Fourth's accession to the throne, or as I believe his appointment to the Regency, the clergyman was dead (for it was not, as often surmized, Parson Johnes who married them); and his name, I understand, remains annexed to the instrument purporting to be a register or certificate of the ceremony. If any corroboration were necessary to substantiate facts of which such proofs are extant, and to which they are so many unexceptionable testimonies, it would be found in the behaviour of Mrs. Fitzherbert on many subsequent occasions, and in the uniform respect and attention which she has received from nearly all the branches of the Royal family.

It was about this period of 1787, that the Prince was induced by the artifices of his father, and against the better judgment of Mr. Fox, to promise Parliament never again to incur any debts; although the most plausible plea and most venial cause for incurring them, viz., the inadequacy of his income, was left designedly unremarked after the payment of them. When fresh

debts had accumulated, this incautious promise seemed a bar to all further application to Parliament. Mr. Pitt so considered, or affected so to consider it; and either the Court or the Ministry, possibly the latter only, suggested a marriage as an indispensable condition to the only effectual removal of the Prince's embarrassments, viz., an augmentation of his revenue. Among the unmarried Princesses who awaited his choice, the Princess of Brunswick, and the Princess of Mecklenburgh, afterwards Queen of Prussia, were the two who most naturally occurred, if they were not actually submitted to him by the Government. In beauty and youth the latter had infinitely the advantage. Perhaps those very qualities were objections in the mind of the adviser by whose suggestions he was at that time most guided. Lady Jersey is supposed to have promoted a *publick* and legal marriage as a security against any renewal of intimacy with Mrs. Fitzherbert; a purpose which it did not accomplish. And she may have decided

his preference of a woman of indelicate manners, indifferent character, and not very inviting appearance, from a hope that disgust with a wife would secure constancy to a mistress. All well-informed persons agree that the preference of the Princess of Brunswick was the choice of Lady Jersey and Lady Harcourt; though some suppose that a reluctance to gratify his mother by raising a second Princess of Mecklenburgh to the throne of England, was an ingredient in that determination. He did not, however, finally accede to the marriage, till he had been assured by the Minister that his actual income, exclusive of the sums set apart to pay his debts, should be one hundred thousand per annum. Yet when the articles were signed, and the Princess actually on her way to England, Mr. Pitt, who on other occasions found his majority pliant enough, gravely urged the necessity of yielding to Mr. Fox's more just and reasonable plan; and thus encumbered the Prince with a wife, and left him, though free of debt, without any immediate augmentation

of revenue. Such was uniformly the Carlton House story.* But in 1820, on the eve of the proceedings against the Queen, Lord Liverpool gave me a different account of part of the transaction; and he assured me that he had it directly from George the Third. He said that the Prince of Wales told his father very abruptly one day, on his return from hunting, that he wished to marry. "Well," said the King, "I will then with your consent send some confidential person to report on the Protestant Princesses of the stated age and character, but qualified for such an alliance. Your wife must be a Protestant and a Princess: in all other respects your choice is unfettered." "It is made," replied the Prince; "the daughter of the Duke of Brunswick." George the Third replied that to his own niece he could take no exception; but yet he recommended his son to make more circumstantial inquiries about her person and manners, &c. The Prince pretended to have done so; though

* M'Mahon, Lord Hastings, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Tierney, and others.

his brothers, or indeed every young English traveller in Germany would, if asked, have told him that even in that country, where they were not at that period very nice about female delicacy, the character of his intended bride was exceedingly loose. He persisted; and the marriage took place. Lord Liverpool was a man of correct memory and strict veracity. The King, too, though narrow-minded and in some senses deceitful, was not likely to invent and relate an unnecessary falsehood. Perhaps the two stories may be in some degree reconciled by supposing that the whole matter of the payment of the debts and the necessity of a marriage, was arranged between the Prince and the Minister before the King was apprized of it; and that it was determined between them that the Prince, in the shape of asking his father's consent, should be the first to announce the scheme to His Majesty. However that may have been, untoward circumstances certainly attended the royal match. Unfavourable reports of the person, and yet

more of the manners and character, of the destined bride came pouring in from Germany after the articles were signed and it was too late to recede. The latter circumstance had allayed all Lady Jersey's disposition to soften or contradict; and it is most probable that she encouraged and exaggerated such gossip and scandal. If the Prince gave any credit to them, all that he afterwards heard or suspected must have appeared a natural sequel to his bride's early life. Thus did she arrive in England conducted by her bitterest enemy (a lady well practised in the arts of tormenting, insulting, and degrading a rival) to a husband half estranged already, with no protection but at Court, where, if the King was disposed to take part against his heir apparent, old resentments and recent disappointments rendered the Queen averse to the daughter of the Duchess of Brunswick. The appearance of the bridegroom at the ceremony, whether the effect of brandy or nervous agitation, was certainly neither flattering nor even respectful to his bride;

and few days had passed before many coarse and indelicate strictures on her person and behaviour were currently reported, as coming directly from the Prince, in every society in London. The ill-usage which she shortly afterwards experienced at Brighton and elsewhere, both from the Prince and Lady Jersey, though, no doubt, much exaggerated in gossiping circles, became ere long notorious, and was in truth unpardonable. The unpopularity of the Prince* which ensued, his separation from the Princess, and her reception at the opera (a circumstance which greatly exasperated him), are all well known, and will be copied from the journals of the time into every work of history or biography that treats of the subject. Neither his reconciliation with Mrs. Fitzherbert, nor his subsequent intimacies with Lady Hertford and others (though such returns and

* It was so great in fashionable society that persons of rank (afterwards indebted to him for advancement in it) have plumed themselves upon refusing to meet him at dinner at my house; observing, that he was not fit company for gentlemen!

changes of love were usually accompanied by similar changes and returns of a train of favourites, friends, and dependents), ever softened his hatred towards the Princess. When, in 1820, on the death of Napoleon, some officious courtier ran up to him (then George the Fourth) to apprize him of the news, which he supposed would be welcome to him, in these words, "Sir, your greatest enemy is dead!"—"Is *she*, by G—d!" was the royal husband's dignified and pious ejaculation.

In 1806 Sir John and Lady Douglas (the latter of whom was supposed to be actuated by some motives of jealousy) made affidavits charging Her Royal Highness with adultery, with pregnancy during her separation from her husband, and with the concealment of her delivery of a male child. These affidavits were conveyed by Sir James to the Prince of Wales. The Prince showed them to Lord Thurlow: Lord Thurlow advised him to consult his father's Ministers. He accordingly asked Lord Grenville what he was to do. "I do not know, Sir, what your Royal Highness

must do; but I do know what *I* must do. I must lay the whole business, Sir, before His Majesty without the smallest delay." He did so. The King said he should be guided entirely by his Ministers; and I think that *he himself* suggested that Lords Commissioners should be named to investigate the truth of the allegations. Mr. Fox, on the score of business, health, and connection with the Prince, declined being named of the Commission. Lord Chancellor Erskine and Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough, being both magistrates and of the Cabinet, were necessarily, and Lord Grenville and Lord Spencer, as men of gravity of demeanour and strictness of morals, were judiciously united in the Commission. The Solicitor-general, Sir Samuel Romilly, was their legal adviser. The report made by the Commission thus constituted and advised has long since been before the publick. It has been the subject of much animadversion. It is indeed too evidently the composition of persons disagreeing in their opinions, and mutually conceding points for the sake of

an apparent unanimity. It perhaps acquits the Princess of the main charge somewhat too decidedly; and it dwells on levities for which there could be no legal punishment, process, or defence too severely. It was answered at great length but with much ability in a letter the joint composition of Lord Eldon, Mr. Percival, and Mr. Plomer*; the first furnishing the law, the second the argument, and the third the prolixity. It concluded with a request to be restored to the comfort and honour of His Majesty's royal presence. The King adroitly referred this prayer to his Cabinet, professing that he should be entirely guided by their advice. We had many and long discussions on the evidence, the report, and the answer; and Lord Sidmouth, so often nicknamed the Doctor, had some reason in terming the business as he did, "a sad *blister*." Mr. Windham was disposed to acquit the Princess entirely; others formed a judgment of her conduct yet more unfavourable than that expressed

* Afterwards Vice-chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

by the Commissioners. All, however, except Mr. Windham at last acquiesced in adhering to the report of those four lords. It would have been ungracious and, perhaps, unseemly and presumptuous in the Cabinet to have passed a severer judgment on Her Royal Highness than four grave Commissioners, selected for their experience and austerity, had, after examining the witnesses *vivâ voce*, thought fit to pronounce. The majority could not, I believe, have given a less severe one consistently with their conscientious conviction. Mr. Grenville and Lord Sidmouth thought indeed that after so broad an acquittal of all criminal charge as was contained in the report of the Commissioners, we should exceed our powers in speaking of levities at all; and they wished the Cabinet to decline giving any opinion whatever. The King, however, who with characteristick sagacity perceived our embarrassment, and sought to ripen it for the purpose of gathering its fruits, pressed us for an explicit answer. He would never have been satisfied without one; and

he did in fact, by dexterity though not in direct words or by command, extort one from us. The substance was, that he should admit the Princess of Wales to his presence; but should convey to Her Royal Highness through the Lord Chancellor a strong admonition to be in future more circumspect and discreet in her behaviour. When this determination was concluded, Lord Erskine made some remarks of a nature which cannot be recorded even here, but which very forcibly exemplified the strange combinations of publick life by which it became the duty of Lord Erskine to reprimand a Lady of high station for *levity* and indecorum. Mr. Windham sent in a separate minute declaring his conviction of the entire innocence of the Princess. It is not the least strange circumstance attending the whole transaction that that document never was published. For during the communications between us and the King, the Prince and the Ministers were systematically in the papers; and the *Morning Post* in particular quoted not only the substance but

the very words of the Princess's defence, the King's reference, and the Cabinet's minutes. Mr. Perceval printed a hundred copies of the defence. It was no doubt intended to make these proceedings the main ground of attack against the Ministry. How far the King was a party to such design, I know not. Had the business been contrived to perplex his confidential servants, as we were by a great misnomer always styled, the matter could not have been thrown into a better shape for that purpose. But a difference on the Catholick Bill arose. Mr. Perceval discovered a more convenient pretext for taking office in a zeal for our establishments than in defending an indiscreet woman and blackening an heir apparent on whose favour he might soon depend for office and power.

The Prince was dissatisfied with our report. He contended, and justly, that it was not binding on him. He called on the Cabinet to say so, and to acquit him of all improper solicitation of them and of all persecution of her, with which he had been

charged in the letter of the Princess to the King. His request was reasonable; and after some private representation to Lord Howick, I insisted on such a minute being sent to the King and communicated to His Royal Highness. It was but a cold testimony to the Prince's conduct in conveying the charge originally to the King, and during the subsequent investigation of it. It was given on the last day of our meeting in Cabinet. The change of Ministry alarmed His Royal Highness exceedingly; but fear drove his weak mind to court his enemies, not to support his friends. He was, it must be acknowledged, really dissatisfied with us; and he thought the avowal of that dissatisfaction a good contrivance for deprecating those measures favourable to the Princess which he apprehended the new Ministers might be meditating. They, indeed, without departing from our report, gave an acquittal somewhat more unequivocal to the Princess. She was received at Court: but all zeal for her welfare subsided when power was ob-

tained by her champions. In the course of five or six years she was abandoned, and then refused redress and afterwards publickly prosecuted by many who in 1806 and 1807 had warmly and factiously espoused her cause.

The budget was this year opened by Lord Henry Petty in a speech eloquent, luminous, and popular. The loss of Mr. Pitt even as an orator, seemed almost supplied by his successor. This brilliant display of youthful talent, together with the prospect of no more taxes during the war, rendered the new plan of finance palatable to the House, and popular with the multitude. My distrust of my own judgment in such matters made me bow to the authority of Lord Grenville and Lord Henry Petty. It seemed however to me at the time somewhat too plausible and too agreeable to be sound; and persons were not wanting in our own party who whispered that this celebrated scheme was fallacious and impracticable. Perhaps it was more easy to regret the loss of our expectations

when it was superseded, than it would have been to extol its wisdom from any experience of its benefits.

I have not spoken here of the abolition of the slave trade. It was virtually carried in Mr. Fox's life-time; and every particular relating to the painful progress and glorious issue of the question has been faithfully recorded and published by its eager partizans. It is observable that the King and the Prince were as hostile to it as ever. The inflexible zeal of Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville carried it; and there can be little doubt that a similar determination to risk the existence of his Ministry on the question, would have enabled Mr. Pitt to accomplish it many years before. The only* time I sat in a commission to pass bills I had the satisfaction of giving the Royal assent to a measure which Mr.

* I should substitute the word first for only: for I have since sat in two or, I think, three others — the Repeal of the Game Laws, the Reform Bill, and the Slave Emancipation.

Fox had so earnestly promoted, and which put an end to one of the greatest evils to which the human race has ever been exposed, or at least to our share in the guilt of it.

END OF BOOK THE THIRD.

V. H.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

1807—1808.

N. B. — Written in 1816 and transcribed in 1824. This is a new division of chapters or books. This Fourth Book or Chapter formed part of the Third in the green morocco book.

THE want of stipulation on the subject of the Roman Catholicks at the formation of the Ministry, and the mode by which Mr. Fox had prevailed upon them to refrain from any application to Parliament in 1806, have already been mentioned. The reasons which he had urged were no longer in force. A new Parliament had been called; and the Ministry, though equally friendly to the system of conciliation and concession, had not the same prospect or the same security of permanence in power as during the life-time of Mr. Fox, whose transcendent abilities were necessary for the management of the

House of Commons, and who enjoyed the confidence of the heir apparent more than most of his colleagues, though never perhaps so entirely as the Prince's own professions implied and publick report supposed. With this view of the alteration of circumstances the Roman Catholicks of Ireland were naturally once more disposed to agitate the question of their claims. I soon learnt that Mr. Ryan, the correspondent* of Mr. Fox, was among the most active in instigating his brethren to petition Parliament. I consequently wrote to the Duke of Bedford† and apprized my colleagues, that unless some legislative measure was adopted we should lose the confidence of the Roman Catholicks of Ireland. The accounts from other quarters in that country confirmed my apprehensions. Disturbances broke out in the county of Sligo. They appeared not to be directed to any political object, but they were quite sufficient to excite some

* See Book or Chapter the Second.

† See *Les Pièces Justificatives*, appendix D.

alarm in the Government. The magistrates were as usual loud in magnifying the danger, and purposely remiss in suppressing the disorders. They hoped to compel the Government to resort to those measures of coercion which placed arbitrary power in their hands. The address and firmness of the Duke of Bedford defeated their design. He avoided all unconstitutional measures, and named a special commission to try the offenders by the common course of law. The Chancellor Ponsonby, however, distinctly gave it as his opinion that the disturbed counties must be proclaimed, unless something were done immediately to conciliate the Roman Catholicks. The Ministry was thus reduced to a most unpleasant dilemma. They must either have offered a very unpalatable plan to the King, or they must have entrusted to the intemperate and factious gentry of Ireland the execution of laws whose spirit they disapproved for the purpose of resisting a plea of which they acknowledged the justice, the policy, and the necessity. Thus situated, they could

not hesitate. They were bound to incur the risk of the King's displeasure and its consequences, rather than abandon their principles and sacrifice their judgment to the preservation of office. The Duke of Bedford saw some of the leading Roman Catholicks; and, without giving them any positive assurances, discussed sundry measures of conciliation with them, and wrote both to Lord Spencer and to myself the result of his interviews, pressing the Cabinet through us to come to a decision. Mr. Elliot and Lord Chancellor Ponsonby endeavoured to prevail on the Roman Catholicks not to present a petition. But, in spite of the late exertions and professed attachment of the Chancellor and the Ponsonby family to the cause of the Roman Catholicks, and in spite of the sound judgment, earnest zeal, and unblemished honour of Mr. Elliot, neither of them ever possessed the confidence of the Roman Catholick body. Perhaps the official solemnity of the one, and the natural caution and modest reserve of the other, disqualified them from

establishing so cordial an intercourse between the Government and the Roman Catholick dissenters as the interest of both parties required. Of our three great appointments in Ireland, the Duke of Bedford as Lord Lieutenant, Mr. George Ponsonby as Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Elliot as Secretary, it may be said that each separately considered was admirable, and yet, notwithstanding the great harmony subsisting between them, the result was not altogether fortunate. There was perhaps too much similarity in some trifling particulars of manner rather than of character, arising in each from different causes, to suit a people among whom reserve passes for pride and circumspection for coldness. The Duke of Bedford, with an excellent understanding, a high spirit, and a benevolent heart, had considerable application to business, great liberality of sentiment, and a perfect courtesy and urbanity of manner. When his opinion was once formed, he was far from wanting firmness, but he perhaps had too much distrust in his own capacity while

forming it. He speaks so well both in private and publick, that every man remarks how seldom he utters; and he is so unobtrusive that, without any disposition in him to conceal his views and opinions, it is often difficult for others to ascertain them. The state of his health, accompanied with some depression of spirits while he was in Ireland, greatly confirmed and increased his natural taciturnity; and these circumstances in the high situation he held, precluded him from much general or open intercourse with Irishmen. Mr. Elliot*, who had every other requisite, was ill qualified to correct such a defect in his principal, or to counteract its

* Mr. Elliot died in 1818 in the country house of Lord Minto, to whose family he was distantly related and cordially attached. In propriety of manners, correctness of understanding, and purity of mind, he left no superior and few equals. If not the most brilliant or the most profound, he was the most kind-hearted, candid, and disinterested of the followers of Mr. Burke. A character of his eloquence which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 2nd of November, 1818, is just and happy, and I believe was written by Sir James Mackintosh.

consequences. His understanding was indeed of a high order, his apprehension quick, and his judgment, where not swayed by a superstitious reverence for Mr. Burke, good. His knowledge, especially in political matters, was extensive and accurate. He was sincerely earnest in every cause he espoused, and warmer in his attachments to persons than so cold an exterior might seem to denote. But he was so scrupulously and anxiously just, that he never overlooked the slightest obstacle to a measure without full inquiry and painful deliberation. These habits—nay, the very beauty and correctness of his elocution, gave such an air of calmness and caution to his discussions, that eager men were apt to think him indifferent, and bold men to pronounce him irresolute. He had to struggle with another disadvantage in Ireland. He had acted under Lord Camden's Administration; and though the part which he took in those transactions really proved his abhorrence, not his approbation, of the cruel measures of that iniquitous

period, he was in some degree associated with them in the minds of the vulgar, who recognized under the descriptive nickname of the "Castle Spectre"* the pale countenance and spare figure which haunted the same purlieus during that frightful and melancholy epoch. "'Look where it comes again!'" said General Fitzpatrick, "will be the exclamation of the Irish." The observation not only exhibited his usual felicity of expression or quotation, but his knowledge of Irishmen.

Mr. Ponsonby did not perhaps labour under this latter disadvantage: for although he had resisted on the narrowest grounds the Catholick Bill of 1793, he had of late years supported Emancipation and Reform, opposed the Union, and been the chosen advocate of the most popular measures.

* The title of a very successful play which came out about 1797, and was written by M. G. Lewis, the author of "The Monk." The extreme slenderness of Mr. Elliot's person and the entire absorption of his anxious mind in the business of the day made Mr. Windham term him "a *thin phial* of political essence."

He was a lawyer, but connected with a powerful family, and both from professional and parliamentary habits personally acquainted with the most active spirits and leading characters in Ireland. His reputation for abilities was high, his legal and constitutional knowledge much extolled, his disposition generous and affectionate, and his integrity unimpeachable. He was, however, a slow, and, in politicks, a timid and narrow-minded man. He became somewhat pompous upon his elevation to the Seals; and even in the outset of his administration disgusted, if not the most reputable, some of the most formidable adherents of the party by a want of frankness and cordiality and a sudden change of manner towards them. Favours subsequently conferred, however profitable, passed for sheer payment; and the absence of all confidence in those with whom he had acted in unreserved opposition, was deeply resented. Mr. Curran, to whom I particularly allude, was very extensively acquainted with the leaders of the obscure

factions who sway the Roman Catholick body in Ireland. His suggestions, enforced by his wit and eloquence in the low society he frequented, estranged that class of people, and spread far and wide a suspicion that the interests which we had espoused in opposition were to be sacrificed in office. He insinuated that the same influence which had excluded him from the objects of his ambition and from all substantial marks of confidence, would defeat or at least fritter away any system of conciliation which we professed to adopt. The Chancellor Ponsonby was certainly remiss in not removing Orangemen and placing better men in the commission of the peace. It was whispered that the approach of a general election and a regard for his family interests in boroughs swayed him too much in such matters. His possession of the Seals was never felt by the Roman Catholick body as it was intended to be, a pledge of the sincerity of Government, and a proof that the first opportunity of removing all ob-

noxious disabilities would be taken, and the body of the people of Ireland admitted to a full share in the management of their country. However, the correspondence of these three Ministers and others convinced the Cabinet that nothing but some measure of conciliation which would afford an additional and voluntary pledge of the favourable disposition of the Government, could prevent the Roman Catholicks from petitioning Parliament. While, therefore, every argument grounded on the late rejection of their claims and the inexpediency of pressing them too soon, was urged through various channels* to dissuade them from that step, the Duke of Bedford was requested to throw into an official shape what he had already conveyed by private letters — viz., a statement of the disposition of the Irish Roman Catholicks, and of such measures as, short of a repeal of the disabling statutes, would in his judgment satisfy or at least pacify that

* See No. 10 of the *Pièces Justificatives.*

body of His Majesty's subjects, and thereby contribute to the safety of Ireland and the strength of the empire. He accordingly in a letter* dated Dublin Castle, February 4. 1807, addressed to Lord Spencer, apprized him that "a deputation of five persons from a select meeting of Catholicks had waited on Mr. Elliot, to know whether it was the intention of the Ministers to support a Bill in Parliament in favour of the Catholick body, and to communicate their intention of petitioning Parliament for relief from the restrictions to which, under the existing laws, they were subject. Mr. Elliot had declined giving any direct answer till he was authorized by the Lord Lieutenant or the Government in England. The interval was employed in collecting information on the real disposition of the Roman Catholicks on the subject. The Duke of Bedford thought that a partial measure, removing some of the restrictions, would induce the respectable part of the

* See *Pièces Justificatives*, a paper marked 2.

body to relinquish the intention of petitioning. In the meanwhile they had, as a measure of precaution in case the answer from England should be unfavourable, appointed a committee of twenty-one to draw up a petition. The more moderate had called on Mr. Elliot, anxious to ascertain whether any relief to the Roman Catholicks during the session was in contemplation. They expressed their opinion that a favourable answer might stop the petition; but they were, on the other hand, persuaded that without it every branch of the Roman Catholick body would concur in petitioning Parliament. Though most of this moderate party of Irish Catholicks had declined attending the meetings in Dublin, they had done so in civil terms; and some of them, notwithstanding their absence, were named of the committee of twenty-one to prepare the petition. Lord Fingal, a grave and sensible man, less communicative than most of his countrymen, was considered as the leader of the temperate Roman Catholicks. Immedi-

ately after his interview with Mr. Elliot, he called a general meeting. He did not wish the question to be agitated, but he dreaded any separation from the body of the Irish Catholicks; and if once persuaded that the measure of petitioning would be resorted to, it was thought that he and his party would join the more eager and vehement in the petition. The Duke of Bedford then proceeded to state that the removal of all restrictions affecting the service and promotion of Roman Catholicks in the army, and the removal of the incapacity of persons of that persuasion to serve as sheriffs, together with a facility given to their admission into corporations, were in his judgment the partial concessions particularly alluded to by the moderate party, and such as they had insinuated would induce them to relinquish their intention of petitioning. He cautiously added, that he could not positively assert that any or all of these concessions would stop the petition; but they would afford a reasonable chance of preventing it. They would

certainly meet the wishes of many who had taken an active share in the discussions."

The draft of an answer to this official letter was considered by nearly the whole of the Cabinet at Lord Spencer's house. It was drawn up with great caution, and it was discussed very minutely, with a view to conciliate without sacrificing the various opinions of the members of the Cabinet. Lord Sidmouth very emphatically, and Lord Ellenborough less earnestly, adopted as the motive and exposition of their approbation a phrase which dropped from Lord Erskine, namely, that the measure then proposed was a mere *corollary* to the Irish Act of 1793.

The dispatch has been before the publick. The whole transaction was ably treated in the papers*, pamphlets, and debates of the day. So much, however, turned on the expression of one passage in that dispatch, and on the manner in which the attention

* See particularly the "Letters of Scævola," published by Ridgway, and containing a plain and correct statement of the whole question. They were written by Mr. Allen.

of the King was drawn to it, that it is necessary to refer to the substance of the whole, and to the language of the particular passage in relating the causes of our dismissal from the Ministry in 1807. Moreover, the conduct of that Ministry on the occasion, has been so much traduced by their enemies, and mistaken by their friends; it was at the time so much the policy of their opponents to misrepresent them as disrespectful and perfidious to the King; and it has been since so much the fashion even among their friends to admit them without examination to have been rash, foolish, and inconsiderate; that justice to them requires from the historian of the Whig party some detail of the transaction, even if in vindicating their conduct he shall incur the risk of tiring his readers.

The draft was submitted to the King on the 9th of February; the dispatch itself was dated the 12th; the intermediate days being employed, as I shall shortly relate, in reconciling His Majesty to the measures therein recommended. The dispatch begins

by reminding the Lord Lieutenant of the recent rejection of the Catholick claims, the avowed opinions of many of the Cabinet in favour of them, but the undeniable fact that the general sense of both Houses had been unequivocally against the concessions then in view. From these facts, those Ministers who are favourable to the measure draw an inference, that any fresh application to Parliament would be unsuccessful; and that the renewal of the question could tend to no publick good, nor promote the advantage of either the empire or the Roman Catholicks. The Duke of Bedford is authorized to urge this opinion of the Cabinet to all those with whom he communicates on the subject. He is then cautioned not to offer any part of the indulgences, which on other grounds the Ministers judge it advisable to submit to the King and Parliament, *as the price of their forbearance to petition.* It is stated that before any such intention was known, it was in the contemplation of Ministers to rectify the inconvenient and contradictory

provisions of the law with respect to Catholicks serving in the army and navy. The intentions held out by Lord Clare in the Lords, and Lord Buckinghamshire (then Mr. Hobart) in the Commons of Ireland in 1793, are related and dwelt upon at some length, and the reasons for extending further the previous concessions are urged to the Duke of Bedford, with a view no doubt of persuading His Majesty, who was to read the draft, of the reasonableness of the measures announced through the Lord Lieutenant to Ireland. The inefficiency of the law, affording really and substantially none of the advantages which it nominally holds out to the Catholicks, the comparative safety of extending such indulgences to England, and the promise made in 1793 by the then Ministers, are the topicks most earnestly urged as being those most likely to make impression on the King; but the general advantage of engaging the military talents of Ireland in the service of the empire are touched upon; and the dispatch proceeds;—"On these

grounds it is, that His Majesty's servants have thought it expedient that in the Mutiny Bill to be this year proposed to Parliament, a clause should be offered for enabling His Majesty, whenever he shall deem it advisable, to confer *any military commission whatever* on any of his liege subjects; such commission to be lawfully exercised in all places within and without the empire, and under no other condition than that of taking such oath of allegiance as shall be provided in order to evince their attachment to His Majesty's person, family, and government, and to the vital constitution of this United Kingdom. And another clause will in that case become necessary in order to give all His Majesty's subjects, however employed in any of his forces, a legal right to that full toleration as to the exercise of their religious professions, which by the practice of the army, and by the just and liberal orders by which it is governed, they now enjoy, but for which it would unquestionably be proper that they should have the security of the laws." It is then re-

marked, that in the Mutiny Bill these regulations would be annually renewed in Parliament, which would thus be enabled and called upon to remedy any inconvenience to which such a concession could by possibility give rise; a remark manifestly intended to catch His Majesty's attention, as it was hardly necessary to state it to the Duke of Bedford, and still less to those to whom he was to communicate the substance of the dispatch. The duke is then again exhorted to disclaim any view of compromise, or any purpose of obtaining the abandonment of a projected petition by such concessions. The admission of Roman Catholicks to the office of sheriff, is objected to, as founded on the same principles, liable to the same objections, but not productive of the same advantages as the general question, being a matter comparatively of minor importance. The admission to corporations is stated to be legal already, and any further interference of Government unnecessary: indeed, the Ministers imply that they do not understand the nature of

that suggestion in the Lord Lieutenant's letter. The dispatch, however, ends with a recommendation to the Irish Government to give the Roman Catholicks the full benefit of all laws existing in their favour.

This draft of a dispatch, together with a minute of Cabinet, was communicated to the King on the 9th of February. We the next day received a note from His Majesty containing, as we thought, a direct refusal to sanction the measures proposed, and some ill-humour at the proposal being made to him, for removing a restriction which formed in his opinion a most essential part of the question lately rejected in Parliament. He reminded Lord Spencer of his former and invariable principles, expressed his determination to adhere to them, and his disappointment, after what had passed seven years before, at their being again disturbed by the agitation * of such questions.

We met on Tuesday, the 10th, at Lord

* Vide No. 3. of *Pièces Justificatives.*

Grenville's house. Every member of the Cabinet, except Lord Fitzwilliam, who was in the country, and Lord Spencer, who was ill, was present. Lord Grenville evidently foresaw the embarrassing dilemma to which he would soon be reduced, of either supporting the Catholick claims in Parliament, and thus offending the King, not without some imputation of using him ill, or of eluding the question, and thereby exposing himself to the charge of inconsistency and time-serving policy. He now felt the oversight of not coming to some explicit understanding with the King at the time the Administration was formed. He also entertained a notion that, by waiving the question in 1801, when Mr. Pitt and he went out upon it, they had given a bad impression of the transaction to the publick; and he was consequently determined to wait till he was dismissed, rather than offer his resignation before the King exacted some sacrifice inconsistent with his honour or his principles. He was, however, calm, considerate, and open. His direct and

manly character appeared to great advantage on this trying occasion. Unaffectedly desirous to act fairly, and even tenderly by the King, he was yet resolved not to abandon the line of publick duty which his conscience dictated, from any consideration of personal feeling or party convenience.

Lord Sidmouth and Lord Ellenborough had always been adverse to the great measure, usually termed Catholick Emancipation. Lord Sidmouth was, after his manner, prolix and pompous in explaining his uniform hostility to the general measure, and his particular reasons for approving of this more limited and partial concession. But both he and Lord Ellenborough, without subterfuge or qualification declared it to be just, reasonable, expedient, and even necessary. Indeed, the spleen and bitterness of Lord Ellenborough seemed very easily transferred from the Roman Catholicks to those who resisted the solitary measure which he had been prevailed to concede. He inveighed in very unmeasured terms against the folly, the absurdity

the *madness* of rejecting the military aid of Roman Catholicks in a period of danger; he held it preposterous that "the whim, the crotchet, *the twist of one man's brain*," should stand in the way of a great publick benefit. The same process of reasoning might, one should have surmised, have conducted him further. But the exclusion of one-fifth of his fellow-subjects from all objects of ambition, and their consequent estrangement from our Government, were in his mind very explicable without having recourse to the true solution—viz. the folly and madness of one man, and the base servility of others. His father, Bishop of Carlisle, a great ornament of the Low Church, had pushed his doctrines of toleration so far, as to be suspected of Socinianism by his brethren. Thus he had imbibed from education the principles of religious liberty; but he had inherited from nature a disposition to intolerance, together with a strong propensity to indulge in personal reflections, coarse language, and virulent sarcasm. The prin-

ciples in which he was bred, and the temper with which he was born, were at variance with one another. They prevailed alternately according to the bias given at the moment by his connections or interests. But his mode of enforcing his opinions was always the same, and always characteristick of a powerful but clumsy understanding, of a frank but uncandid disposition.

Lord Moira was mysterious and silent. In what little he did say he professed himself stout on the question before us; but hesitated as to the line which in certain unexplained contingencies he might pursue. Mr. Windham took but little part and seemingly but little interest in the subject. He was very sore on some questions of patronage which had arisen between his department and the Admiralty; and he was more occupied with the Norfolk committee on which his election depended than with a subject which involved the fate of the Ministry and possibly the tranquillity of the empire.

Our Chancellor, Lord Erskine, shone least upon this trying occasion. He talked much nonsense and false religion, declaimed against Papists and Mahometans, and plumed himself on having never supported the pretensions of Roman Catholicks. He betrayed ignorance as well as weakness, mistook the policy of the question, confounded the state of the law, and forgot every circumstance that had attended its enactment or its amendments. When the moment of decision approached, he played with pencils and pens, took up books, and pretended even to sleep with the hope of not being committed in any resolution we might adopt. Lord Howick or myself jogged his elbow and drew his attention to the matter in discussion. He confessed afterwards with a droll simplicity impossible to describe, that he had been strangely affected by the book he had looked into. It happened to be the Life of Egerton Lord Ellesmere, who had received the seals at the same age (fifty-seven) as himself and had held them no less than twenty-seven years! The con-

trast of his own prospects and the fate of his more fortunate predecessor had manifestly astonished and overwhelmed him; and no Papist ever called down the vengeance of Heaven on an heretick with more fervour or fury than Lord Erskine at that moment damned the Holy Catholick Church and all who maintained its tenets. Lord Howick was indignant at conduct so uncongenial with his own generous temper and elevated mind. The chagrin which Lord Erskine would manifestly feel at the loss of office seemed to reconcile Lord Howick to the event; and every hint that dropped from the other on the propriety of a temporizing policy, made him spurn more contemptuously at everything like compliance or submission. At length a paper was drawn up by Lord Grenville, and, after some immaterial alterations, finally adopted by the Cabinet. This minute, dated the 10th of February, after lamenting the King's disapprobation of part of the dispatch, and assuring him that the Cabinet had endeavoured to frame it in a way to reconcile the

different opinions of some of its members as well as His Majesty's known sentiments on the general question, proceeds to urge the propriety and necessity of the measure on the ground of the principle of the concessions of 1793 in Ireland, and of the danger to which the empire is exposed from the extended dominion of France. On the first topick, the measure is represented as founded on the very principle of former concessions; on the second, the danger of refusing to admit Roman Catholicks to a *full share* in the military defence of their country is insisted upon. It is true, however, that in one passage the measure is styled *a fulfilment of the engagements which had formerly been entered into under His Majesty's authority.*

This minute was accompanied by a letter, also dated the 10th of February, from Lord Grenville, respectful in terms, ably written, and very persuasive. The exact extent of the measure is not there detailed further than by reference to the draft of the dispatch; and the measure is only stated to

be, far from being in opposition to any known or expressed opinion of His Majesty, perfectly conformable in its principle to that concession to which the King had formerly consented. Throughout these two papers there is an endeavour to reconcile His Majesty to the concession, but as there was no reason to suppose that his objection was directed to any one obnoxious provision, none are particularly referred to. The general character, not the special provisions of the measure are described and insisted upon.

The majority of the Cabinet were fully persuaded that the answer of His Majesty would be either a steady refusal or an immediate dismissal of those who urged so unpleasant a measure upon him. The 11th of February was a *levée* day. The King conversed with Lord Grenville, Lord Erskine, and Lord Sidmouth on the subject of the intended bill. He showed more disposition to acquiesce than was expected. It is not unlikely that two of the lords, and more particularly Lord Erskine, who

had originally styled the intended measure a mere *corollary* to the Irish Act of 1793, dwelt exclusively on that supposed circumstance as its chief recommendation in the closet. The King said he would take another day to consider of it. On the 12th he transmitted an answer to the minute and letter. In this he avows that he has found it painful to reconcile his acquiescence to his feelings, but that he *acquiesces;* and adverting particularly to what passed in 1793, will not prevent his Ministers from inserting the proposed clause in the Mutiny Bill. He adds, that he cannot go one step further. The Cabinet thanked His Majesty for his acquiescence; and after a repetition of their earnest wish to avert by all means consistent with their duty every painful discussion, alluded with concern to a dispatch received that morning from Ireland, by which it appeared that there was no hope of preventing the immediate presentation of a petition from the Roman Catholick body. The original letter or dispatch

considered at Lord Spencer's was then dispatched to the Lord Lieutenant.

Within a week of this period, and before any detailed communication of the measure had been made to Parliament, two more dispatches were received from Ireland and *read by the King.* The first contained a very clear and detailed report of all that passed in an interview between the Roman Catholick deputies (Lord Fingal, Lord Ffrench, Mr. O'Connor, and others) and Mr. Elliot and Lord Chancellor Ponsonby. Mr. Elliot followed his instructions implicitly, and explained to the deputies the intentions of Government. Among the questions put to him by the delegates was one from Mr. O'Connor, who asked if the Catholicks were to be capable of being appointed *Generals on the Staff?* Mr. Elliot answered, "He could only say it was proposed to enable His Majesty to confer *any commission whatever* on any of his subjects." The second dispatch was from the Lord Lieutenant, and gave an account of the Roman Catholick meeting in which the

report of Mr. Elliot's prudent and guarded answer to Mr. O'Connor's question is mentioned, and the question *how far situations on the staff were intended to be opened to Roman Catholicks* again brought into view. On Monday, the 2nd of March, a draft of an answer to this dispatch, enclosing *also a copy of the intended clauses*, was sent to the King. In consequence of Lord Spencer's illness, the dispatch was written by Lord Howick. The opening of situations on the staff is clearly described both in Lord Howick's dispatch and in the clauses themselves. They were both submitted to the King, and returned by him the ensuing morning without objection or comment. They were despatched to Ireland the same day.

On the next day, March 4th, both Lord Grenville and Lord Howick saw the King. To Lord Howick, whom he saw first, he expressed his general repugnance to the measure; but Lord Howick, whose clear understanding is not very liable to mistakes, and whose honest nature is quite incapable

of misrepresentation or subterfuge, stated then to Lord Grenville, as he has since done uniformly to his friends and to the publick, *that the King agreed to the measure being proposed in Parliament, and did not urge either the extension of the concession to situations on the staff or any other circumstance* as sufficient to induce him to recal his letter to the Cabinet of the 12th of February. In that letter he had said that he would not prevent his Ministers *submitting to the consideration of Parliament the propriety of inserting the proposed clause in the Mutiny Bill.* Lord Grenville saw His Majesty immediately afterwards, who *said not one word to him on the subject.* The King, be it remembered, had two days before seen the clause*, and the draft of Lord Howick's dispatch containing an answer to Mr. Elliot's inquiry as to the extent of that clause. He had long before seen the Lord Lieutenant's dispatch, which, by adverting to Mr. O'Connor's question, must have

drawn the attention of any one who read it to the very circumstance on which all His Majesty's subsequent conduct was alleged to be founded—namely, the admission of Roman Catholicks to be generals on the staff. Did Lord Howick, with so clear an intellect as he is endowed with, remarkable too at all times for his accurate attention not only to the substance but to the words of those with whom he transacts business, and previously acquainted with the King's scruples on concessions to the Roman Catholicks,—understand him to acquiesce when he said he would *not?* Those who know Lord Howick know it to be quite impossible. Those who do not know him will feel such an account of the transaction to be at least improbable, when they reflect that the King expressed neither discontent nor difficulty on the subject to Lord Grenville, whom he saw immediately after Lord Howick. The King, had he changed his mind on any part of the subject since the 12th of February, or perceived any attempt to lead him beyond that in which he had

then reluctantly acquiesced, would hardly, after insisting on such topicks with Lord Howick, have preserved a strict silence on the subject with Lord Grenville. Lord Grenville had been the most prominent person in combating and overruling his original objections to the measure. If there had been any inaccuracy in the description of that measure to His Majesty, Lord Grenville was the person who had misled him. Will it be believed that George the Third, tremblingly, morbidly alive to anything affecting the laws of exclusion on the score of religion, and singularly conversant with the nature and form of all military offices, overlooked or misunderstood a clause to render Roman Catholicks admissible to all commissions and appointments in the army whatsoever, including those of a general on the staff! It is surely no want of charity to affirm that he *did* understand the nature of the clause, and that, so understanding it, he on the 4th of March felt no objection to its being proposed in Parliament; or, feeling those objections, deemed it more

suitable to his own purposes to suppress them. In the latter supposition, he acted not only unhandsomely but treacherously. He allowed Lord Howick in 1807, as he had done Mr. Fox in 1783, to proceed with a measure under the impression that he acquiesced in it, with a full determination to disarm him and to convert the transaction into the means of dismissing him. I think, however, that he had no such intention on the 4th of March. Perhaps the eager opposition to the motion announced on the notice of it in the House of Commons, possibly some intermediate communication with Mr. Perceval or Lord Eldon—the latter of whom on the pretext of private concerns he saw about that time—led him to repent of the concessions he had made, and afforded him a prospect of getting rid, not only of a bill which he disapproved, but of a Ministry which he feared and detested. When he looked minutely to what had passed, he perceived, no doubt, that by affecting to misunderstand what Mr. Elliot seemed not clearly to have comprehended, he sheltered

himself from the charge of duplicity. Could he fix that of ambiguity on his Ministers, he could, he thought, deprive them of their characters as well as their places, and defy their opposition to any feeble Administration which he chose to substitute in their stead. Such I believe was his design, and such the extent of his ill-treatment of that Administration. But one circumstance gives some colour to the yet more unfavourable suspicion that he was acting a part from the beginning; that his acquiescence was all a feint; and that he all along cherished the design of defeating the measure, and had encouraged his Ministers to proceed so far with a view of disclaiming, abandoning, dismissing, and exposing them. To explain this circumstance, I must relate another transaction. Mr. Canning, at the opening of the session, had concluded a laboured speech with a motion as long as a pamphlet. The sense of the House was against him. Lord Howick's earnest and manly eloquence was triumphant, and even the personal friends of Mr. Canning were

very faint in his support. It was manifest on that, as on other occasions, that neither concert nor cordiality subsisted between him and the other active members excluded from office. He soon afterwards conveyed (probably through Lord Temple) to Lord Grenville his willingness to negotiate a junction; and Lord Grenville was well disposed to entertain such a proposal. Mr. Canning's accession would not only have strengthened the Administration, but would have brought to the Grenville wing of the party some proportion of the talent of speaking which in the House of Commons seemed to have become the exclusive property of the Foxite division. Lord Howick, Lord Henry Petty, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grattan belonged to the old opposition; Mr. Tierney and Mr. Whitbread, next on the list for high office, were connected with that party; Mr. Thomas Grenville, at no time an active debater, was absorbed in the business of his office; Mr. Elliot was in Ireland; and Mr. Windham, always irregular and sometimes intemperate, had shown the Grenvilles that neither

a seat in Parliament nor connection in office would restrain him from urging in Parliament measures particularly obnoxious to them, such as the impeachment of Lord Wellesley, nor from resisting any encroachment of their family on his official patronage, with independent pertinacity. He was, in truth, much estranged from the Grenvilles. If, in some opinions, he leaned more to that branch of our party, his habits, temper, and manners accorded more with the old associates and friends of Mr. Fox. He resented the offer lately made him of a peerage, and considered it as a broad hint that his services in the Commons were more troublesome than useful. He was actually on the point of resigning on other grounds when we were all dismissed. An office for Mr. Whitbread formed part of the projected arrangement, though it was probably devized by Lord Grenville to counteract rather than strengthen that gentleman's influence; for an apprehension of his preponderance in Parliament and in the party was, no

doubt, Lord Grenville's chief motive for soliciting the co-operation of Mr. Canning. The treaty with the latter was nearly completed, and perhaps Lord Grenville had advanced further in it than was quite correct before he had apprized his colleagues. He explained to Mr. Canning the intended concession to the Roman Catholicks, and Mr. Canning approved of it. He very shortly afterwards told Lord Grenville that the King was dissatisfied. Lord Grenville conceived that he had been misled by the King's early repugnance to the whole measure, which, as I have stated before, had been overruled. He consequently treated Mr. Canning's intelligence lightly, though Mr. Canning was positive. Whether this intimation was made before the 3rd of March and the conversation which ensued on the first stage of the bill, I have now forgotten. It continues a problem how far the King adopted his difficulties from Mr. Perceval's early and publick opposition, or how far that opposition was fomented and invigorated by some secret suggestion from

His Majesty. If the debates showed the subject in a new light to His Majesty, he was certainly in no great hurry to communicate to us his discovery or his displeasure, or to enable us to rectify any mistake which we had made. It was not till the following Wednesday, the regular *levée* day, that he hinted his new objections to the bill, and added that he conceived himself to have stated to Lord Howick that he did *not* consent to the proposed measure in Parliament. If Lord Howick, on leaving the closet, had gone down directly to the Commons to act in direct defiance of the directions he had received, would the King have allowed a whole week to elapse without either rectifying his mistake, if it was misapprehension, or punishing his presumption if it was design? Those who acquitted the King of duplicity must have believed that such improbabilities occurred. After the matter had been mentioned in the House, and the Lord Lieutenant had been authorized to explain the nature and extent of the proposed measure, it was not

easy to recal or even to restrict it with credit or honour. Yet it was not till we were thus far advanced that the King acquainted us with his disapprobation. It is said that Lord Eldon, who had adroitly kept the management of the King's private affairs in his hands, went down, on the pretext of a consultation on his will, to Windsor; and it is certain that before the King's displeasure was notified to us his Ministers, our opponents were aware of the nature of his objection and of the point on which he intended to break with us. It is probable that the whole matter had been canvassed and concerted between him and them. He was, however, embarrassed at our consenting to withdraw the measure altogether. That resolution, so contrary to his expectations and to the wishes of Lord Howick, Mr. Windham, and myself, was adopted at a meeting of those Cabinet Ministers who had been the chief promoters of the bill—namely, Lord Grenville, Mr. Grenville, Lord Moira, Lord Henry Petty, Lord Howick, Mr. Windham, and myself; Lord Spencer

and Lord Fitzwilliam were both absent from illness. We very unguardedly consented to be guided implicitly by the decision of the majority of those present, as to the question whether we should withdraw the bill or resign immediately. I knew the opinions of Lord Howick and Mr. Windham; and though I had some reason to suppose that Lord Grenville was inclined to yield, I conceived that it was unlikely that Lord Henry Petty, and impossible that Lord Moira, should consent to waive the question for a moment. This previous engagement to act in a body, though in some degree a surrender of individual opinion, seemed to me safe. But I was mistaken, and was thus reluctantly brought to acquiesce in the minute of the 5th of March. In that paper we conveyed to His Majesty our intention of proceeding no further with the clause; but we announced that we foresaw that a petition would be presented, and that we did not conceive ourselves restrained in that case from declaring in Parliament our adherence

to our former opinions. We added that the state of Ireland and of the publick interest would probably compel us to submit for His Majesty's decision such measures respecting that part of the United Kingdom as the course of circumstances might require. This concession was very painful to me. I passed the most unpleasant night that I ever experienced from political anxiety. The surrender of our opinion was, as I then thought and still think, quite wrong. It might in many cases prove as injudicious in policy as it was indefensible in principle. Had Lord Spencer and the Duke of Bedford refused to acquiesce in the relinquishment of the measure, we should have been exposed to the censure of the publick, and indeed in a very painful and discreditable difference with our best friends. The impatience of the King to get rid of us spared us this embarrassment, and gave to our blunder all the effect and advantage of an act of dexterity. He put himself completely in the wrong, and relieved us from a situation from which it had otherwise

been difficult to extricate ourselves with honour. Had he accepted our offer, he would have lowered our characters, and divided our Cabinet. He might then have dismissed us on the first occasion with a tarnished reputation and a diminished number of adherents. But he exacted a promise which neither the constitution, nor the least regard to our own honour, could allow us to make. He required an assurance in writing from the Ministers that they would never press upon him in future any measure connected with the Catholick question; in other words, that his advisers would never give him advice upon one great and important branch of publick affairs, in their view of the subject involving the character and even the safety of the empire. To this preposterous demand a short and firm minute was drawn up at Lord Spencer's. The impossibility of fettering the free exercise of our judgment was stated without reserve. The unreasonable and unconstitutional nature of the request was forcibly but respectfully urged, and all assurances on our

part declined which would impose upon us a restraint incompatible with the duties which we had sworn to discharge. A day was immediately fixed for the resignation of our insignia of office, and each in a private audience delivered into the King's hand the seal or staff which he had received from him. Mr. Windham and I were the last; and while in the outer room which is between the closet and the ante-chamber, one of our colleagues being in the closet with the King, he (Mr. W.) began explaining to me with great earnestness the nature of his contest with Mr. Grenville upon a question of patronage claimed by each of the offices which they had respectively held, and which they were that day to resign. He inveighed so bitterly against the grasping spirit of the family, and spoke with such emphasis and gesticulation, that I grew alarmed lest the Lords of the Bedchamber and other sycophants (the growth of Courts), who were at the door and enjoying, no doubt, the business which had brought us there that day, should imagine that it was vexation at the

loss of our places which occasioned the vociferation and agitation which they witnessed. With this suggestion, and the remark that it was now of little consequence to whom the patronage belonged, I succeeded in pacifying and diverting Mr. Windham. But I learnt enough to know that had our Ministry continued, he would have resigned, and that Lord Grenville for some good and some bad reasons would not have been sorry to accept his resignation.

Mr. Windham was a man of high spirit, great vivacity and wit, extensive knowledge both in science and literature, and an insatiable thirst for more, a taste highly cultivated, a fancy full of poetry and pleasantry, together with great acuteness and subtlety of understanding. He had likewise much candour and good temper in discussing his opinions, but none whatever in acting upon them. He had, too, an irresolution amounting to childishness, and more ingenuity than judgment in forming them. His affections for others were not strong; and his pride, easily hurt, had more

particles of little vanity in its composition than were of a piece with the lofty character and bold contempt of popular applause which he affected. As a publick man, he had grievous defects; as a Minister, yet more. He loved flattery, and his palate relished it in a gross form, and served up on the meanest platter. The most fulsome adulation from an inferior blinded his discernment; and he had in office the weakness of supporting his dependents almost in proportion to their want of merit, from a persuasion that their admiration and gratitude belonged more exclusively to him, when no value was set upon them by other men. This was the more unfortunate, as he was more dependent than most men in power on his subordinate agents. With all his talents, he was a bad man of business. One might have applied to him the words of Shakespeare*,—

> "He apprehends a world of figures here,
> But not the form of what he should attend."

The following incident will illustrate my ob-

servation Lord Henry Petty had stepped over from the Treasury to speak with him at the War Department on some occasion which in form required his concurrence. Mr. Windham, after excusing himself for having deferred it, entered into a long and lively disquisition on the advantages of being early inured to office, and on the inconveniences which he felt from a want of those habits which men trained to business possess; he illustrated his reasons, and painted the idle life of opposition in such a variety of similes, and with such felicity of language and playfulness of fancy, that Lord Henry, amused and delighted as he was, was obliged to remind him that he was giving a practical instance of the justice of his remark; for the hour of business was elapsed, and the day was nearly lost in descanting on the want of assiduity and method. But whatever were his weaknesses, as a speaker he was delightful. In fancy and imagery he was equal, in taste, and above all, in delivery, he was far superior to the great god of his idolatry, Mr. Burke. If his views

were somewhat less comprehensive, his arguments were closer, more subtle, and more perspicuous. His pride or noble spirit could occasionally supply something like vehemence and indignation: but real and earnest passion was not his forte. To a cold or indifferent critick he might indeed have appeared equal to Fox, to Pitt, or to Sheridan. In variety of illustration, in acuteness of logick, he scarcely yielded to the first; in felicity of language he approached the second; and in true wit and ingenuity, he more than rivalled the last; but in some yet greater qualifications he fell short of them all. He had not the earnestness, the fire, alas! he had not the feeling, the heart, with which Mr. Fox could rouse and warm, melt or inflame, the passions of his audience; nor had he that combination of energy and sagacity by which Pitt subdued the judgment and commanded the inclinations of Parliament. He wanted perhaps yet more that perception or dexterity which enabled Sheridan, even in a minority, to hit the taste and gratify

the temper of the House and the publick. Yet he indulged his passion for ingenuity as much as Mr. Sheridan; but the vanity of the latter was in truth more reasonable, inasmuch as it taught him to court publick opinion, and to affect the most popular motives for his actions; whereas Mr. Windham, too much extolled for his spirit in facing a clamour, loved to maintain an unpopular paradox, and prided himself on encountering the feelings as much as on detecting the fallacies of his adversaries.* But vanity, after all, was *utrobique molestus;* and intolerant as Mr. Windham was of that passion in other men, it often biassed his conduct, and I am afraid not unfrequently stifled all affection and deadened all feeling for others in him. However, on the whole, he was one of the brightest ornaments of his time; and if more splendid than useful in publick, if more capable of hatred than

* "To seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love."—Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, Act II. Scene 2.

of love in private, and if more indulgent to his inferiors than affectionate to his equals, he never permitted such blemishes to swell into vices, nor forfeited either in political or domestick life the character of a good as well as a brilliant man.

All the Cabinet, and most if not all who had come into office with Lord Grenville, resigned their places on his dismissal. Lord Sidmouth and his adherents had either not the option or declined to remain with the new Ministry. He was suspected by many of our friends of underhand dealings with His Majesty; and as he afterwards declared that he did not understand the full import of the letter to the Lord Lieutenant, some went so far as to insinuate that he suggested the difficulty in the closet. Many reasons not worth recapitulating, as well as that of his retirement from office, satisfy me that such suspicions were totally groundless, and that up to the King's second objection, he acted a friendly or at least an honourable part by the Ministry to which he belonged. When, indeed, he found that

we were to break with the Court on a measure which, though he had acquiesced in, he could not relish, and when he learnt that a negotiation was nearly concluded for bringing into our Cabinet Mr. Canning, whom he regarded as his bitterest personal enemy, it is not wonderful, and is surely pardonable, that he avoided making common cause with colleagues with whom he could not agree in their view either of measures or of men. Truth has induced me to say so much. I have no predilection for the individual, and still less for the species of politicians to which he belongs. He has above once been raised by plausibility, servility, and convenience, arising from a concurrence of accidents, to an eminence infinitely beyond the reach of his capacity. Like most men so circumstanced, he has incurred, and probably deserved, the imputation of duplicity. His empty and pompous manner exposed him to ridicule; and old Lord Liverpool justly observed that he was laughed out of power and place in 1803 by the *beau monde*, or as that grave

old politician pronounced it, the *biu mond.* The folly, however, of Lord Sidmouth was of a sort very congenial with that of large bodies of the community. Great appearance of moderation, inward admiration as well as outward observance of forms, an elaborate and earnest profession of all the commonest principles of morality and the tritest maxims of wisdom, uniformly distinguished him in publick. In private, he had no vice but wine; and his jokes and stories, though frequent and numerous, were inoffensive, as well as dull.* His respect for all former Ministers and past transactions was unfeigned, and the importance he attached to trifles was too well acted not to be very sincere. His very mediocrity recommended him to those (and they are not a few) who dread and dislike all superiority of talent. There were more persons than one who felt

* The praise of his moderation, as I had originally written this passage, was more unqualified and general. But by his conduct in 1817, 1818, and 1819, he forfeited all claims to the character of a mild Minister or merciful man.

what an acquaintance of mine expressed on his (Mr. Addington's) Ministry. "He was glad," he said, "that Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox should know that in spite of their speaking and fine talents, the business of the country could be conducted in a plain way by a man who had no pretensions to genius." Of such men, Lord Sidmouth has always been an idol. He was the fairest specimen, the truest type of the genus,

"The knight of the shire, who represents them all."

There is greater community of feeling in narrow-minded men than wiser ones are aware of. Like other classes or sects, they imagine when any one of the brotherhood is exalted, that some share of his lustre is shed upon them; the vanity of each conceiving that the inferiority of which he is conscious has thereby ceased to be a disqualification. It is right, however, to acknowledge that the moderation* of Lord Sidmouth, when First Minister in 1801, 1802, and 1803, had a very beneficial effect

* Vide note to preceding page.

on the country, and assuaged, if it did not heal the wounds which the anti-revolutionary and jealous spirit of Mr. Pitt's government had inflicted. None thought Lord Sidmouth a wise, many suspected him to be a false man, but the world long considered him as a safe one; though he was in truth much bolder and firmer than he ever chose to appear. The hostility he met with from the upper classes of society proceeded, I fear, more from his want of birth than from his other manifold deficiencies; and his popularity with other branches of the community (which he lost when Secretary of State) was due rather to the absence of talent, than to the possession of any real, much less extraordinary virtues.

His assistance, as has been observed, was either not asked or not obtained in forming the new Ministry, though Mr. Perceval, who had been his Attorney-general, was soon declared Chancellor of the Exchequer. That gentleman, though no great lawyer, was, without much genius, a spirited, ready, and forcible speaker. Af-

fectionate, frank, and generous in private, dangerous and formidable in publick, he united to the most vulgar prejudices and virulent enmities in religion and politicks, courage, integrity, and abilities that fortunately very rarely accompany them. It is singular that his features, with the exception of a winning smile when he was pleased, so much resembled those of Robespierre, that the portraits of that bloody fanatick of democracy might pass for those of our English champion of monarchical and ecclesiastical establishments.

Miserable as was the ambition of the Duke of Portland, it was not extinct. He quitted a couch of pain to preside over a Ministry formed to exclude a party of which he once was called the head, and to resist a measure the prospect of accomplishing which he had declared to be his chief consolation in abandoning it. The other arrangements were not so easy. The pretensions of Mr. Canning were high. Both he and Lord Castlereagh were avowed friends to concessions in favour of the Roman

Catholicks. However, Mr. Canning was prevailed upon to take the Seals of Foreign Secretary, and Lord Castlereagh those of the War Department, though they perhaps agreed in no one opinion but a favourable view of the measure which they thus engaged to resist. Charity leads me to believe that one or both exerted some influence to lower the tone of that alarm for the Church which Mr. Perceval had endeavoured to raise by his advertisement to the Northampton electors on vacating his seat for the purpose, as he gravely alleged, of "rescuing the Establishments in Church and State." The sequel was certainly less violent than such "thunders in the index" seemed to announce. The cries, indeed, of "No Popery" and "The Good Old King" were not sparingly used in the ensuing election. But before that event several debates occurred; and though there was no want of personal asperity, Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, and their respective followers, must have discountenanced the introduction of much fanaticism into the discussions.

Mr. Plumer, an old Whig member, mentioned on his legs the report that Mr. Percival was to have the Dutchy of Lancaster for life as an indemnity for quitting his profession. On this suggestion, Mr. Henry Martin gave notice of a motion to prevent it. Mr. Perceval the next day acknowledged that such was the intention of the King, and left the decision on Mr. Martin's motion to the discretion of the House, which voted by a majority of 93 (208 to 115) to address the King "not to grant the Duchy of Lancaster or any other office not usually granted for life, for any other term than during pleasure." This vote occasioned an incident much talked of at the time as exhibiting that mixture of archness and mischief which is frequently an indication of the malady with which the King had been twice afflicted, and from which many suspected that he was never entirely free. Lord Ossulston, who had the white wand in Lord Grenville's Ministry, took this unpalatable message to Buckingham House. When he had delivered it and expected the answer, the King, after

conversing on other subjects, suddenly said, "I think your Lordship has written to Lord Spencer to tender your resignation?" "I have, Sir." "Why then," replied His Majesty, "as you are here, it may save trouble to deliver up your insignia now." Lord Ossulston immediately put his white stick in the King's hand, who, groping round the room, placed it in the furthermost corner, and returned, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder to the stick and saying, "Now your insignia are gone I will send back my answer by a Privy Councillor;" and then, with evident complacency at his own contrivance, bowed Lord Ossulston out of the room.

The success of this first division raised the spirits of our friends: and several persons hitherto unconnected with our party, especially Lord Hardwicke, somewhat unexpectedly declared in our favour. Some among us were for pressing the House to declarations against the new Ministry and the advisers of the pledge; others recommended a more temperate line of policy,

and wished to wait for the measures of the new Government. I, as well as Lord Howick, Mr. Tierney, and Mr. Whitbread, leant to the more violent measures; but Lord Grenville, General Fitzpatrick, and the most experienced members of Parliament, deprecated all immediate and direct attempts to force the new Ministry from their offices by parliamentary censures. They were certainly in the right. Had such efforts been made with success, the collision between the Commons and the Crown would too probably have ended, like that of 1784, in the defeat of the House of Commons. A contest between the House of Commons and the Crown, which ends in the triumph of the latter, is not only a blow but a permanent injury to the cause of English liberty. The champions of that cause should never employ any majority which they may have obtained to such a purpose, unless they are satisfied that the temper of the people and the firmness of their adherents will secure them against ultimate discomfiture. No such inconvenience oc-

curred in 1807. We were defeated in the Commons; and a censure of the pledge exacted by the King was overruled by a motion for the order of the day, carried by no less a majority than 22, the numbers being 258 to 236. In the debate, Mr. Canning ended his speech by declaring that "Ministers were determined to stand by the King, even if they should find it their duty to appeal to the country." So unconstitutional a menace of dissolution would, in better times, have subjected the member to the severest censures. It was, indeed, answered with spirit by Lord Henry Petty; but it was not arraigned in the tone which might have defeated its purpose. Mr. Roscoe, the historian, a man of pure principles and simple manners, had indeed risen to move that the words should be taken down; but the Speaker called on Lord Henry Petty, and Mr. Roscoe was not sufficiently conversant with parliamentary proceedings to insist, as he might have done, on being heard on a question of order and privilege. Lord Howick, worn out with the

debate and depressed by a violent headache, was scarcely listening to what passed, and was quite incapacitated from taking a part. The menace and the recovery of a majority had their effect on Parliament and the country. A more direct censure subsequently moved by the Whigs was rejected by a majority of 46.

These triumphs, however conclusive, did not satisfy the Ministers. Parliament was prorogued and dissolved on the 27th of April, 1807. The debates had indeed been as advantageous to the Whigs as the divisions were to their opponents. The perspicuous statements and manly character of Lord Howick seemed to acquire fresh ascendency in the Commons. He was not only seconded by Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Windham, and Lord Henry Petty; but Mr. Whitbread, in vindicating his friend from the aspersions of the Ministers' adherents, seemed to have forgotten those differences which had arisen in office, and which revived but too soon afterwards. Mr. Plunkett, too, the greatest accession to

Parliamentary debate that many years had produced, exerted a species of commanding eloquence and close reasoning in favour of concessions to Roman Catholicks, which the House, already enriched with much genius and talent from Ireland, had never yet witnessed from that country.

Lord Grenville had so recently shown his partiality to Lord Wellesley, and had conferred such real power on him by an attention to his wishes at the late election, that he must have expected his assistance on this trying occasion. The approbation expressed in private by Mr. Wilberforce of the Cabinet's conduct in their correspondence with the King, and the gratitude professed by that gentleman for the final abolition of the slave trade, led the ex-Ministers to indulge hopes of receiving the sanction and support of him and of the powerful body with which he was connected. Lord Wellesley, though friendly to the concessions to the Roman Catholicks, joined the Ministers; and Mr. Wilberforce, after absenting himself on the plea of illness,

condescended to take full advantage of the cry of "No Popery!" in his ensuing election for Yorkshire. Sinner and saint equally deserted us in our adversity. Lord Wellesley was rewarded with the Garter. The same unsubstantial but prevalent object of great noblemen's ambition propitiated the powerful interest of Lord Lowther, who at the same time received an Earldom with the title of Lonsdale. These two Garters had fallen vacant during our Administration. The one was destined to the Duke of Norfolk, the other to Lord Fitzwilliam. The Prince of Wales, however, solicited the Duke of Norfolk to waive his pretensions in favour of Lord Moira. His Grace, though supposed to have more predilection for that distinction than was very compatible with his plain and coarse but strong understanding, was nevertheless not averse to sacrificing the immediate object of his ambition to favour with his future Sovereign. He wished, however, to affix two conditions: 1st. That Lord Fitzwilliam should yield his also to the Duke of Bedford; 2ndly,

That he (the Duke of Norfolk) should have the next that was vacant. The old jealousies between him and Lord Fitzwilliam, which I have before adverted to, made him annex greater importance to the priority than to the favour itself. But his last condition was quite inadmissible; for, as Lord Grenville justly observed, by substituting Lord Moira for himself, he would place himself in Lord Moira's turn. This point was some time in discussion at Carlton House; the Chapter was deferred; and Lord Fitzwilliam fell ill at Milton. In the meanwhile the questions between the King and the Cabinet had arisen; and His Majesty reasonably enough declined giving to a falling Ministry windfalls which otherwise disposed of might be of so much assistance to him in forming a new one. These details are hardly worth preserving. They show, however, the importance which good and even sensible men attach to such contemptible baubles; and they prove, though they do not account for, the influence of paltry distinctions in the government of

mankind. The Duke of Argyll, to whom we offered a green riband vacant by Lord Galloway's death, was an exception to this observation. He wrote Lord Lauderdale word that he would rather not have it, but had no vanity in declining it. If it were of the slightest use to the party, he would accept it; and if his declining it were likely to injure the Ministers or to lessen the value of the thing itself, he hoped that the whole circumstance might be kept a profound secret. Having finished his letter, he drew on it a caricature of himself with a star and riband, as furnishing an additional motive against his acceptance of it; though he had, in truth, so advantageous a person that no decoration could have appeared misplaced upon it. On our dismissal, the King offered it to him as from himself; but the Duke of Argyll declined it with as much good judgment and taste as he had shown good humour in his former refusal of it. He was flattered, he said, by the offer; but he was confident that His Majesty would not press upon him at the moment of their dis-

missal a mark of favour which he had refused at the hands of his friends. I feel gratified in recording the good sense and good feeling of a most agreeable man, whose indolence and love of pleasure will too probably never allow him to furnish me with another opportunity in the narrative of political affairs, in which his extraordinary quickness, high station, and amiable disposition would enable him, if he were so inclined, to take a conspicuous part.

Our case stood ill for a general election. The Catholick question was little understood, and less relished. The King, long the most popular man in his dominions, derived fresh favour with the publick from his age and infirmities. Our real vindication consisted in a charge of insincerity against him; but such a line of defence, at all times indecorous, would then have been odious, injudicious, and unsafe. Our adversaries were active. They found the offices full of Mr. Pitt's, or rather of Lord Melville's partizans, who hailed the return of their patrons and comrades as a delivery

from masters from whom they had experienced discouragement, and had dreaded, because they had merited, dismissal and reform.

We raised a subscription the very day of the dissolution for the management of the press, and the distribution of hand-bills. The sum was small, not exceeding six hundred pounds; and more than a third was wasted before any committee of management was organized. In the meanwhile, the elections went much against us. Even the Dissenters, *upon whom, in a contest with the Crown, the Whigs must always mainly rely*, were alarmed at the report of our indulgences to Roman Catholicks, and, from prejudice against them and a misconception of the question, joined in some places with the cry of intolerance in favour of Court and High Church candidates against the friends of religious liberty. The management of our press fell into the hands of Mr. Brougham. With that active and able man I had become acquainted through Mr. Allen in 1805. At the formation of Lord

Grenville's Ministry, he had written at my suggestion a pamphlet called "The State of the Nation." He subsequently accompanied Lord Rosslyn, and Lord St. Vincent to Lisbon. His early connection with the Abolitionists had familiarized him with the means of circulating political papers, and given him some weight with those best qualified to co-operate in such an undertaking. His extensive knowledge and extraordinary readiness, his assiduity and habits of composition, enabled him to correct some articles, and to furnish a prodigious number himself. With partial and scanty assistance from Mr. Allen, myself, and two or three more, he in the course of ten days, filled every bookseller's shop with pamphlets, most London newspapers, and all country ones without exception with paragraphs, and supplied a large portion of the boroughs throughout the kingdom with handbills adapted to the local interests of the candidates, and all tending to enforce the principles, vindicate the conduct, elucidate the measures, or expose the ad-

versaries of the Whigs. Our appeals were chiefly directed to the Dissenters. We succeeded in allaying their suspicions, and reconciling them to their natural friends so well, that during the latter elections they were at least neutral, and in many instances zealous supporters of the Whig candidates. The elections, however, were on the whole unfavourable to Opposition. Many leading members of our party were excluded or compelled to seek shelter in such close boroughs as their friends could provide. The Duke of Northumberland, always on the alert to make his importance felt at the moment of a change, ungenerously started Lord Percy against Lord Howick in Northumberland. He thus enhanced the value of his desertion in the eyes of the Ministry, by endangering the seat of their principal opponent. The county, however, did not second his views, and the meeting and canvass promised success to Lord Howick. Nor was his uncle Sir Harry averse from the contest. He would readily have furnished the money.

But Lord Howick prudently judged that, in the precarious state of his father's health, it was hardly worth while to impair the family fortune. Lord Thanet or the Duke of Bedford found him a seat. It was some time before any could be provided for Tierney. Irresolution in our candidates, lost Surrey and Liverpool: Westminster, for which Mr. Sheridan persisted in standing, fell into the hands of the Burdettite reformers: and the general result of the struggles in populous places proved, that if the Court had not gained, the Whigs had lost the people. Lord Fitzwilliam, indeed, rescued us from the reproach of universal failure. He maintained, in the person of his son Lord Milton, a gallant and expensive contest for Yorkshire itself. By dint of personal popularity, he was ultimately successful. In Scotland our loss was less than in England; and in Ireland we were yet more successful.

The first session of the new Parliament, after some trials of strength, in which the Whigs were worsted, was chiefly oc-

cupied in debates of crimination and recrimination between the contending parties. The acrimonious character of Mr. Perceval's eloquence, and his narrow view of every political question, revived and perpetuated such personalities; without aiding the objects of either party, they very sensibly lowered the character of Parliament, and shook all confidence in publick men. The press was not inactive. The main and important question of the removal of Roman Catholick disabilities gained by discussion, chiefly through the *Edinburgh Review* and the lively and eloquent *Letters of Peter Plymley*. Mr. Perceval, adopting the narrow principles suggested by Mr. Stephen, began to invade our commercial system; and either on the pretence of retorting the injustice which our enemy could not enforce, or on some abstract principle of belligerent rights, a general interference with neutral trade was commenced. Every memorial or dispatch of the late Ministry was ransacked for the purpose of distorting accidental phrases

into a justification of measures which they never pursued, and of silencing objections, which could not be refuted, to the policy of their successors. In the same spirit, and with as little real advantage to the country, though with some show of success, the expedition to Copenhagen was undertaken. The Danish fleet, neither formidable nor useful to us, was wrested on very flimsy pretexts from an industrious and inoffensive nation. Some secret articles in the treaty between Russia and France were alleged to justify the outrage. But the measure afforded an assignable motive to the Emperor Alexander for breaking with England and uniting himself closely with Napoleon. Whether Alexander dissembled or not, is a problem difficult to be solved; but it is clear that Napoleon thought at the time that the young Emperor felt affection for his person and admiration of his genius, and was willing to lend himself to all his designs against Great Britain. He co-operated in the plan of excluding us from the Continent, and persuaded

Napoleon that he was as eager in the prosecution of that project as himself. Napoleon boasted of his personal ascendency over the Czar; and, in conversation with Count Melzi, who had questioned the policy or practicability of his continental system, grounded his belief in its ultimate success on his conviction of the sincerity of his brother Emperor's attachment. In support of that sincerity, he alleged an anecdote which, if it showed the sincerity of Alexander's attachment, proved also the small reliance to be placed on his power of pursuing a plan in direct hostility to the interests of his people. Alexander at Tilsit asked Napoleon "why he showed such attention to General Beningsen? did he think him a good general?"—"Franchement," answered Napoleon, "c'est pour vous faire ma cour. Vous lui avez confié votre armée, et c'est assez qu'il ait votre confiance pour m'inspirer des égards et de l'amitié." But Alexander replied, "that he was compelled from want of military experience and skill to confide

his armies to others; that he was consequently in their hands; and though he feared and detested could not do without them." So imprudent an avowal proved in the judgment of Bonaparte an unbounded confidence in him, and he for a season acted on that persuasion; though he afterwards seems to have suspected Alexander of duplicity from the beginning, and during his first exile in Elba told Lord Ebrington that he was a "véritable caractère grec" —a phrase which in the mouth of a Corsican conveys the imputation of the excess of falsehood, dissimulation, and treachery.

From this period till the breaking out of the Spanish war, all Europe but Great Britain and Ireland, was virtually subject to Napoleon. This extension of power drove the French Pretender, since King Lewis the Eighteenth, to England. He had not been invited, and George the Third was incensed at his arriving without leave. He would not see, much less receive him at Court. He remained at Gosford, a house hospitably lent him by Lord Buckingham, till he hired

Hartwell; and during the whole time he was treated with much coldness and even neglect by our Court. The Prince of Wales however, who loved to curry favour where his father had forfeited it, sent some unmeaning but complimentary messages; and afterwards gave him a dinner at Wimbledon, where the Prince made over his cups some silly and extravagant protestations of his zeal in the cause of legitimate monarchy. This incident, little noticed at the time, and originating in levity or perhaps drunkenness, led possibly to the more marked attentions paid by him when Regent to the exiled family of Bourbon, and suggested the part which he acted in the subsequent transactions. The drunken bout at Wimbledon may have altered the destinies of France, Europe, and mankind!

Napoleon had conceived the gigantick project of excluding England from all intercourse with the Continent. This scheme, impracticable in itself, was aided by the ignorant and intemperate retaliations of our Government. Lord Howick employed with

great felicity an illustration* furnished to him by Mr. Allen, and compared Mr. Perceval to the monkeys who, in return for the stones cast at them by Sindbad, pelted him with the cocoa-nuts he was desirous of obtaining, but unable to gather. In describing the spiteful little animal, Lord Howick contrived without indelicacy or coarseness to keep the personal appearance as well as the policy and principles of his antagonist in the minds of his audience.

General Sir Charles (afterwards Lord and recently Earl) Grey died in the short recess of the autumn of 1807, and by the accession of his son Lord Howick to a seat in the House of Lords, we lost our best qualified leader in the House of Commons. His place has never† been adequately supplied. It was not easy to supply it at all at the time. Talents, indeed, were not wanting. Mr. Windham, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Tierney, and

* On reference to the reports, I find that Lord Howick made use of this illustration the session before, when Perceval in opposition had been urging the policy which he afterwards so improvidently pursued.

† Written in 1817.

Mr. Thomas Grenville, were from very different but obvious causes disqualified for it. Mr. Grattan was exclusively interested in Irish affairs, had disclaimed all intentions of accepting office, and was moreover too singular in his manners as well as too old to engage in an undertaking foreign to his habits. Mr. Whitbread was obnoxiousto a large branch of our party: he had recently differed with us, and urged his difference with warmth and even asperity. He was in fact too vain as well as too rash to acquire any real or permanent ascendency over the minds of independent and well-educated men. But though unfit for the leader, he was one of the most necessary followers of the Whigs; and the loss of his assistance and co-operation would have divided and nearly dissolved the party. He would hardly have brooked any acknowledgment of superiority in Lord Henry Petty; and there was something in the sober, prudent, and judicious character of the latter, more adapted to slow and certain growth than to sudden and unexpected elevation. He pre-

ferred waiting till his superiority should be felt, to assuming a premature authority over the other members of the party. At length Mr. Ponsonby, ex-Chancellor of Ireland, was fixed upon. The scheme had been faintly suggested by Lord Grey, who was connected by marriage with Mr. Ponsonby, and had a very exalted opinion of his abilities. It was eagerly adopted, among others, by Mr. T. Grenville, who frequently repeated his observation that Mr. Ponsonby was a remarkably "handy" speaker in Parliament. Mr. Windham, too, approved; and Mr. Whitbread and Lord Henry Petty acquiesced, each no doubt with a secret persuasion that his own abilities would be more conspicuous under a nominal than a real leader of the party. Mr. Ponsonby was consequently brought into Parliament at the beginning of the session for the purpose of assuming an ascendency over a large, intelligent, and independent body of gentlemen with scarcely twenty of whom he was personally acquainted. A preposterous scheme! Can influence over men's minds be

conferred like an office? Can the voluntary confidence and submission of a party be transferred like a title deed, or can the genius which governs mankind be created at the will of a knot of politicians like a queen bee in a hive? This strange attempt placed Mr Ponsonby in a situation fraught with difficulties, and he never surmounted them. He had been extolled for his parliamentary talents by the Irish, and he really possessed some; but I soon discovered that he was very ill qualified to estimate the relative importance, much less direct the current of Englishmen's opinions. At our very first political dinner at Lord Grenville's, some apprehension was expressed of a motion announced by Mr. Sheridan at the close of the preceding session. Mr. Sheridan was not present. Indeed, he never attended any meeting at Lord Grenville's, who was studiously, and, as will be seen in the sequel, injudiciously, averse to any connection or even intercourse with him. Mr. Ponsonby detailed to us the views of Mr. Sheridan, which were, he said, nowise injurious to us as a party, and quite distinct and

well digested. He soon afterwards took me aside and informed me with much ostentation of mystery that he had sat up with Mr. Sheridan at Brookes's for the purpose of hearing him on the subject over his cups; that he had himself cautiously avoided taking too much wine, and on his return home had noted down the heads of his conversation. The importance attached to Mr. Sheridan's drunken conversation, and the elaborate contrivance for discovering his designs, gave me no exalted opinion of our new leader's sagacity nor favourable impression of his mode of dealing with his friends.

At the same dinner a discussion took place on the line which we should adopt upon the rupture with Austria, and the instances * made for peace by the Ambassador Stahremberg.† In the course of it, Mr. Whitbread showed much pertinacity, and Lord

* Stahremberg communicated these to me and other opposition Members; but where his narrative was not supported by written documents, it would have been unsafe to rely on it.

† Appendix E.

Grey nearly as much irritation at his unaccommodating temper. It was clear that the removal of the latter to the Lords, though it might have extinguished any little feelings of jealousy in Mr. Whitbread, would fail of producing any cordial agreement between them. Mr. Whitbread was always surrounded by flatterers; some, from mere servility of disposition and submissive admiration of all he said or did, others, with baser designs of interest or revenge, instilled suspicions and inflamed his animosity against his brother-in-law. Lord Grey, on the other hand, frank, artless, and impetuous, and conscious of the sincerity as well as purity of his affections, never measured his words nor restrained his warmth in his intercourse with a man with whom he had been so long and so intimately connected. The uneasy footing on which they lived was a source of vexation to both. Perhaps it was ultimately fatal to the peace, the fortune, and even the life of Mr. Whitbread; certainly it had a very pernicious effect on the party to which they belonged. I have men-

tioned their accidental altercation at Lord Grenville's, because Mr. Whitbread's behaviour on that occasion manifestly made a deep impression on our host. It is not clear that a reluctance to connect himself in office with a temper so unaccommodating did not bias his judgment in some subsequent negotiations with the Court, and there can be little doubt that his exaggerated view of Mr. Whitbread's defects reconciled him very much to the failure of so many. The subjects so earnestly canvassed at our dinner, were scarcely thought of afterwards. Mr. Sheridan made no motion; and though Mr. Whitbread moved resolutions on the Russian and Austrian offers of mediation, and on his third succeeded in obtaining the sanction of fifty-eight Members of Parliament to a motion which Lord Grey and Lord Grenville had disapproved, yet the notice taken of the subject was slight and the debate on it uninteresting. Parliament was chiefly engaged during the session of 1808 with the Copenhagen expedition and the Orders in Council. Lord Sidmouth concurred with

the opposition in censuring the former; but success effaced the iniquity of the expedition, and it sounded so grand to bombard a capital and take a fleet *, that the real insignificance of the acquisition was never understood by the publick.

The Orders in Council were ably exposed and pertinaciously debated, especially in the Lords. But the subject, involving many questions on the law of nations and connected with details of commerce and revenue, was not attractive; and Lord Grenville urged on such a series of motions, and spoke on them all, though with great earnestness,

* In justification of the expedition some secret articles were alleged to have been signed at Tilsit, intimating an intention to convert the Danish ships to purposes of hostility against Great Britain. Ministers believed in such articles, but perhaps they never existed. They are suspected to have been forged by a French *intrigant*, of the name of D'Entraignes, who had access to Mr. Canning and many of our Ministers, and who is still recollected by the English publick from the singular circumstances of his death. He and his wife were murdered in broad daylight by their Italian servant at Richmond or Barnes.

knowledge, and eloquence, at such intolerable length, that Parliament grew weary and the country indifferent to the question. The Catholick petition excited more interest. When Lord Grenville gave notice of the motion, Lord Moira deprecated the discussion of the subject, declaring that it was more likely to retard than promote the object. This circumstance alarmed: Lord Moira's sentiments seemed like an indication of the Prince's taking a part against the petitioners.

Lord Moira, on the dissolution of our Ministry, had in civil but very decisive terms separated himself from our party and attached himself exclusively to Carlton House. He thus expressed himself in a letter of 27 April, 1807, to me:—

"I must repeat what I said and what I detailed to Lord Grenville. I attach myself completely to the Prince. Where he does not go with you, I do not. Of course I never can have any claims on my late colleagues, and they can have no call upon me. You are the men with whom, beyond all in the

country, I should wish to act, both from my respect for your talents and principles, and from earnest personal liking to all of you. It is most probable that we shall co-operate. But that must be from the decision of the moment. I have not had the slightest communication with the present people, and do not see how any could occur. Nor do I believe that the Prince has any disposition for greater intimacy with them. Suddenly as his determination came upon me with regard to our party, I cannot but say that it appeared to me perfectly natural. Putting aside his claims as Prince of Wales and as an anxious well-wisher to our Administration, the number of votes which he furnished ought alone to have procured him some attention. But I must acknowledge that he was treated with as continued and mortifying a slight as could have been exhibited towards the most insignificant runner of a party. It was impossible he should not feel it; and I should be devoid of that attachment to him which I have so long pro-

fessed, did I not stand by him on the ground which he has in consequence been obliged to take. At the same time, every occasion in which I can make common cause with my old comrades will be gratifying to me."

The grounds of the ill-humour at Carlton House which dictated the above letter, have been already touched upon; and Lord Moira, though he would probably have acknowledged, did not in this letter advert to the circumstances which palliated at least, if they did not account for and justify, the little intercourse between our Ministry and the heir apparent. These were, the Prince's language immediately after Mr. Fox's death; the delicacy of any communication with him, except through Lord Moira, on the subject of the Princess; and the singular and marked silence which Lord Moira always preserved in Cabinet about the Prince's wishes, or indeed his concerns. But, whatever were the grounds of the Prince's complaint, or whatever were the excuses we could allege in our defence, it is clear that Lord Moira was, from the

moment of the dissolution of our Administration, exclusively attached to the politicks of Carlton House; and his forwardness in deprecating the discussion of the Roman Catholick claims reasonably led to an inference, that a decided line had been taken by the Prince against the motion then about to be submitted to Parliament. Full of this apprehension, I solicited and obtained an audience of the Prince of Wales. He was somewhat startled when, with a solemnity very unlike my usual manner, I ventured to interrupt him in some very desultory conversation, and to remind him that I came by appointment to speak to him on a subject nearly affecting his honour, and the interests of that Crown to which he was destined to succeed. He listened patiently while I stated, in the strongest language I could command the situation of Ireland. I dwelt on his popularity there, arising from the persuasion that he was favourably inclined to the Roman Catholicks; and I painted the advantages

to the empire, that such a persuasion of his inclinations should prevail. Should he forfeit that popularity, and cloud the only gleam of hope which they had in their prospect, I added, that I much feared that he would never be King of Ireland. I conjured him to consider, that though forbearance towards his father might very laudably lead him to suppress his opinions, and preserve a neutrality on the question, that it would not justify his acting in contradiction to them; that he owed much to his father, but that he had duties both to himself and to his country; and that he should not compliment away his future Crown or the welfare and integrity of the empire. He answered, that if he took any active part he might occasion a relapse in the King; or at least that any relapse which occurred, would expose him to imputations which he could not bear. He had declared that *he never would take any part* on the subject hostile to the King's wishes; by that declaration he would abide. "My sentiments, however," added he, "are unaltered." He then

contrived, without naming Lord Moira, to imply that he had not known, much less authorized him to use the language he held upon Lord Grenville's notice. He expressed surprise at Lord Fingal's leaving town without seeing him, and soon afterwards ascribed it to Lord Hutchinson's forgetfulness, who was, he said, as usual *in nubibus*. He then directed me to bring Lord Fingal to Carlton House when he returned to London. I did so on the 25th of May. His Royal Highness spoke to us for a good hour and a half by the French clock on the chimney-piece. He recounted at great length, but more adroitly than distinctly, the history of his own opinions on the Roman Catholick question. They were those of toleration, he said; they were friendly to the Roman Catholicks; they were such as our friends had always held and acted upon. But that they were in favour of admitting Roman Catholicks to all offices and to Parliament, he never expressly stated; though he certainly implied that they were such as would satisfy

Lord Fingal. He slurred over his own conduct in 1805; censured pretty freely our Administration; and then dwelt most earnestly on the impossibility of a son's taking any active part in a measure the success and even agitation of which might drive his father to insanity. He authorized Lord Fingal to repeat to his Irish friends that his *sentiments were unaltered.* But he very studiously left him and them to collect what those sentiments were, from past transactions or from general and vague expressions, with which, though Lord Fingal seemed gratified, I was, I own, at the time very far from being satisfied. He doubted the policy of bringing the matter on now; *hoped he was mistaken* in that view; and declared distinctly that Lord Moira's observations on the notice were the suggestions of his own mind, and not made in concert with him. He should not communicate his opinions or wishes either on the time or substance of the motion to Lord Moira. "But Moira," he added with affected carelessness, "will of

course vote with you; he cannot do otherwise." He then speculated on the votes of individuals, and even suggested the channels through which some, both in the Lords and the Commons, might be applied to; correcting the obvious tendency of his remarks frequently, by observing that he was an indifferent person, and merely talking for the sake of conversation. On the whole, if his object was, *without committing himself*, to convey to Lord Fingal's mind a conviction that he would support the Catholick claims when the fear of irritating his father to madness should cease, his discourse was well adapted to his purpose, and succeeded. Lord Fingal was highly satisfied : I was not. My view of his conduct implies a suspicion of general and habitual insincerity; but acquits him perhaps of the charge of a direct breach of promise and forfeiture of honour on the subject of Catholick Emancipation.

The debates were to all appearance highly favourable; but a circumstance occurred in the course of them, which, though it

softened the opposition at the time, led to altercations between the petitioners and their advocates seriously injurious to their cause. This was the mention of what was afterwards called *the veto;* that is, the assurance that the Roman Catholicks would acquiesce in any arrangement which, restoring them to their political rights, would give the Crown a negative on the appointment of their bishops in its dominions. The person through whom their views on the subject had been communicated to Lord Grenville and Mr. Ponsonby, was Dr. Milner, a Catholick priest of some learning and eloquence, but bigoted in his opinions, violent in his temper, and indirect and unscrupulous in his methods of promoting the cause of his Church. He disclaimed, first, Mr. Ponsonby, who might possibly have misunderstood him, and overstated the concessions which he represented his Church as willing to make; and 2ndly, Lord Grenville. Mr. Ponsonby had injudiciously adopted a phrase in recommending the accommodation suggested,

which no orthodox Roman Catholick could hear without alarm, viz. that the King was thus to be as much the Head of the Catholic as of the Protestant Church. Dr. Milner, in great agitation, requested Lord Grenville to correct this expression; and Lord Grenville gave the explanation as he was instructed by Dr. Milner. Yet these offers, as understood and repeated by Lord Grenville, were as peremptorily disavowed in Ireland as those expressed by Mr. Ponsonby. And Dr. Milner did not hesitate to incense the clergy and laity of his profession against their Protestant supporters in Parliament by imputing to them designs hostile to religion, and impeaching their veracity on the very points on which he had notoriously, and perhaps purposely, deceived them. Some among the priesthood from fanaticism, and others among the laity from turbulence and faction, dreaded the admission of their fellow Catholicks into all their constitutional rights. Eligibility to worldly honours and profits would somewhat abate the fever of religious zeal; and the removal

of political disabilities would annihilate the influence of a few noisy orators over a body of men, constituted by exclusion alone a large party in the community.

At the end of the session, a bill enabling the judges to hold a man to bail on the bare accusation of a misdemeanour by an *ex-officio* information, was brought in by the Attorney-general, Sir Vicary Gibbs, and passed the Commons without observation. Little attention was at that time paid to any questions affecting the liberty of the subject and the freedom of the press. Lord Stanhope and myself opposed every stage of the bill in the Lords, but we met with little support. The bill for abolishing reversions drew more attention. It had originated with the finance committee in the Commons. Mr. Perceval, on a subject affecting his darling prerogative, stooped to manœuvre and artifice. He allowed all the machinery of committees to weave such measures, and risked not his popularity in the House by opposing such schemes of economy *there*. He knew that

in the dusk of the session the Lords, like a faithful Penelope, would unravel the web; and the expectations depending on the completion of a work, of flimsy texture at least, would be silently but effectually defeated. The bill was thrown out on the motion of his brother, Lord Arden. Another bill, however, suspending though not abolishing all grants in reversion, was carried through Parliament at the close of the session, not without some difficulty and some very strong indications of a compromise between the contending parties in the Cabinet.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.*

BOOK III. Page 42.

8th March, 1833.

MR. PITT was, according to all printed and many authentick private accounts, born at Hayes in Kent, in 1759. At that time his father, the great Lord Chatham, was Minister of Foreign Affairs, and conducting a successful war against France. It is impossible that he should have been born in France, and quite notorious to his family, his friends, and many persons older than himself, yet surviving, that he was not. I cannot find and do not believe that he was ever out of England before he was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Ministry of Lord Shelburne, whose Peace, signed in 1783, he defended in the House of Commons; and with whom, in consequence of the vote against that peace, he resigned office soon afterwards.

* This appears to have been a private letter.—*Editor.*

Upon the conclusion of that peace and his resignation of office (and not, I have strong reason to believe, *till then*), he went to France, chiefly for the purpose of learning the language. With that view he went into *pension*, or took a lodging at Rheims. The uncle to Prince Talleyrand was then Archbishop of Rheims, and living at the Abbaye St. Thierry, at no great distance from the town. Hearing that the son of the celebrated Chatham, and himself a young man of so much promise, and indeed performance, as to have filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in England, was in the neighbourhood, he pressed him to take up his abode at St. Thierry; and directed his nephew, Prince Talleyrand, then Abbé de Perigord, to assist him in the study of the language and to do the honours of the country to so distinguished a stranger. Talleyrand did so. Mr. Pitt stayed, as far as he recollects, six weeks at St. Thierry. He was attentive to French literature, and earnest in his endeavours to return Talleyrand's information or instructions about it, by a corresponding account of the best English writers in prose and verse. He seemed to like literary conversation, but his progress in speaking French was not great, and his pronunciation of it was, as Talleyrand describes it, very guttural. They lived together for those six weeks, but though without any estrangement, dispute, or

cause of discontent, did not contract for one another that sort of liking or friendship which might have been expected from men so young, so nearly of an age, and so distinguished for their talents, attainments, and station in their respective countries. Mr. Pitt left Rheims for Paris, or rather for the Court, at the period of the year when the royal family were at Fontainebleau, whither, as Talleyrand distinctly recollects, our ambassador (he thinks the Duke of Dorset) had followed them: a circumstance which proves, as indeed many others do, that Mr. Pitt's visit to France must have been after the Peace, and not before. On his arrival at Fontainebleau, notwithstanding his name and extraordinary talents, he was not very successful, especially with the Queen, who, owing either to his awkward gait, his countenance, which she did not reckon handsome or even intelligent, or possibly to his bad accent in French, betrayed her want of discernment and levity by pronouncing him to be a man of no extraordinary talents or *agrèmens*, and used some very disparaging phrases about him. M. De Chastellux, afterwards Minister in America, on hearing of these foolish and frivolous remarks of Her Majesty, expressed his disapprobation of them in a pun much relished at the time—*C'est egal; il ne s'en dépitera pas pour cela.* All this was told me

by Talleyrand last night, as indeed much of it had been on former occasions. He did not, however, repeat to me a circumstance which I have frequently heard him mention with some little asperity, and which, to say the truth, does not place Mr. Pitt's taste and good breeding in the most favourable light. When Talleyrand, then ex-Evêque d'Autun, came (I think in 1792 or late in 1791) with Chauvelin's embassy to England, and had official intercourse with Mr. Pitt as Prime Minister, Pitt never hinted or alluded to the civilities which he had received from him or his family, or even to the acquaintance they had formed nine or ten years before at Rheims. As it was the policy and fashion of that period to treat the Revolutionary Embassy of France with marked coldness and aversion, Talleyrand considered the omission of all such natural acknowledgments of past civility as an indication, though perhaps an injudicious one, of political hostility to France, rather than of personal slight or affront to him. But when, in 1793 or 1794, in his private capacity as an exiled Frenchman, he sought and obtained an interview with Mr. Pitt to prevail on him to recal the harsh order for removing him under the provisions of the Alien Bill, and not only his request was rejected but the same marked silence on their early acquaintance

was observed by Mr. Pitt, he inferred from it a want of feeling and generosity; and he has, I suspect, retained a strong resentment in his mind for what he deems harshness amounting to cruelty, and neglect bordering on indignity. It has often perplexed me how to account for that behaviour of Mr. Pitt. Without any strong predilection in his favour, I must, even as a political opponent, own that I never heard of any other trait or anecdote which would affix on his character so much want of propriety, feeling, and almost of humanity, as this. It seems, when one considers Talleyrand's name, condition in society, and even figure and lameness, almost impossible that Mr. Pitt should have forgotten him; yet I am inclined to think it less improbable than such unnecessary harshness and unfeeling behaviour in an English gentleman, of indisputable honour and humanity, and above all of such sense and sagacity as Mr. Pitt. In corroboration of such a conjecture, which at first sight seems quite preposterous, it may be remarked that in 1790 and 1792 the Evêque d'Autun or M. De Talleyrand were the constant and almost only designations of the person who in 1783 was generally called the Abbé de Perigord; and that Mr. Pitt, in some far more memorable transactions of his life, from the multiplicity and importance of the

affairs in which he was so soon and so constantly engaged, has been known to have forgotten, to a very remarkable degree, circumstances which, on a mind less occupied with mighty matters, were calculated to make a very lasting impression: such, for instance, as the transactions of the Regency in 1788, and particularly the difference between the decisions of the English and Irish Parliaments on that occasion; a circumstance of which, till reminded by Mr. Elliot, he retained no recollection whatever in 1799.

I have written a volume. Read it and send it back; for it will do for a memorandum, and prevent my forgetting things, like Pitt.

Yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

General Lafayette told Rogers in 1791 or 1792 that he had known Mr. Pitt when in France between his two Ministries — that is in 1783; that he had visited him in the country in company with Dr. Franklin; that in conversing on American subjects and forms of government, he had found himself much more republican than Franklin, but that Franklin was struck and surprised not only at the talents of young Pitt, but at what appeared to Franklin and Lafayette his antirepublican and antipopular principles. This is a confirmation of the period at which Mr Pitt visited France.

APPENDIX B.

BOOK III. Page 83.

BAYLE, in the article *Melanchthon*, note (I.), accounts for his *irresolution* by saying "qu'il avoit beaucoup d'esprit, beaucoup de lecture, et une science très vaste;" and he then proceeds to defend his position and seeming paradox with his usual acuteness and more than his usual eloquence. I believe that he is right, and a striking circumstance in history confirms his observation. Remote periods and barbarous ages and countries abound with men in all stations of energy, determination, and decision of character. As mankind grow more civilized and enlightened, such characters become rare. How many princes, statesmen, and warriors have there been in France, England, Germany, in the course of the last two centuries, full of accomplishments and great qualities of mind and of heart, and yet deficient in moral and political courage, and incapable of prompt and vigorous decision. Whereas in remoter periods of our history, and even in modern Turkey or Muscovy,

one scarcely hears of a man in exalted station who hesitates on the greatest occasion in taking a line decidedly on one side or the other. To be sure, it must be acknowledged that in any unquiet state of society, no man without decision of character can long fill any high station at all. They are either condemned, whatever be their birth, to indolence and obscurity, or they perish early on the scaffold or by some other violent death.

APPENDIX C. (1.)

BOOK III. Page 104.

Cleveland Square, 6th May.

MY DEAR LORD HOLLAND,

I have read over the chapter which you had marked in the *Edinburgh Review* relative to the squadron sent with Duckworth to Constantinople in 1807. In the short account which is given of that transaction, I do not see anything to alter or to correct; the heads of it seem to be very truly though very briefly stated. The Ministers who succeeded to us, or at least their pamphlets and newspapers, endeavoured to give an impression of the naval force being inadequate to its object. Upon this topick, therefore, it was necessary for me to enlarge a good deal. It was, therefore, made evident that the force was large enough upon all abstract military principles; that it was larger than was deemed necessary by our Minister then at Constantinople, or by the naval officer whom it re-enforced there; that it was larger than Lord Collingwood deemed requisite, and was never

considered by Duckworth, who commanded it, as in any respect or degree inadequate to its object. These points were chiefly insisted on in the House of Commons, and were not in the smallest degree contradicted or shaken in the debate. If the part of this question which now interests you is the naval part, much of the sort that I have mentioned would be to be added or supplied from papers. But as far as the statement of the *Edinburgh Review* goes, it seems to me to be correct.

Yours ever most truly,

THOS. GRENVILLE.

APPENDIX C. (2.)

BOOK III. Page 104.

(*Most secret.*)

Downing Street,
21st Nov. 1806.

SIR,

Some late proceedings on the part of the Porte having rendered it indispensably necessary that measures of a prompt and decisive nature should be adopted towards that Government, I have it in command to inform you that orders have been sent to Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood, to detach a sufficient squadron of H. M. Ships, under the command of able and experienced officers, with directions to proceed without a moment's loss of time to the Straits of Constantinople, and then to take such a hostile position as will enable them (should representations suitable to the occasion, which Mr. Arbuthnot has been directed to make to the Turkish Government, fail of effect) to act offensively against Constantinople.

I have it farther in command to inform you that orders have been sent to Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood, to direct the officer commanding the squadron above mentioned, in the event of strong measures becoming necessary, immediately on the commencement of hostilities to despatch a fast-sailing vessel with intelligence of the same to you. And I am to convey to you H. M. pleasure that without even waiting for such communication, you make all necessary arrangements and preparations for the transporting of a corps consisting of 5000 men, under a suitable convoy, to Egypt; and that, on the receipt of such communication, you give the necessary orders for carrying the measure into effect.

The object of H. M. Government in determining on this measure, is not the conquest of Egypt, but merely the capture of Alexandria, for the purpose of preventing the French from regaining a footing in that country, and of enabling H. M. forces there to afford countenance and protection to such of the parties in that country as may be best disposed to maintain at all times a friendly intercourse with Great Britain.

In choosing an officer to command this expedition, attention must therefore be paid not only to his military talents, but to those qualities which may best suit him for a civil or political

trust of very considerable importance, which the service in which he is to be engaged, must from its nature involve. His interference in those party dissensions which generally agitate Egypt, or in those contests for power which are generally maintained among the Beys, will probably be unavoidable; and the precise line which it will be proper for him to take in the exercise of such interference, would be difficult at this time and at this distance, to point out. But in such questions it will be advisable that he should communicate with Major Misset, and that he should pay such attention to the opinion of that officer as, from his local information and experience, it shall appear to merit.

(Signed) HOWICK.

(In the absence of Mr. Sec. WINDHAM.)

To General the Right Hon. Henry Edward Fox.

A private letter of the same date from Lord Howick expressed that it was the wish of H. M. Government that General Fox should not name any officer to command the forces destined to act against Alexandria, till he heard further from home.

Appendix D.

Book IV. Page 160.

Pièces Justificatives: being the Correspondence and Minutes of Cabinet relating to the Catholick Bill 1807.

1. Note from Earl Spencer to the King, dated 9th February, 1807, transmitting Nos. 2, 3, and 4.

2. Despatch from the Lord Lieutenant, dated 4th February, 1807. Received the 6th.

3. Minute of the Cabinet, of the 9th February.

4. Despatch from Earl Spencer to the Lord Lieutenant, sent 12th of February, 1807.

5. Note from the King to Earl Spencer, dated Windsor Castle, 10th of February, 1807. Received the same day.

6. Note from Lord Grenville to the King, dated 11th of February, 1807, 1 A. M., transmitting No. 7.

7. Minute of Cabinet of the 10th of February, 1807.

8. Note from the King to Lord Grenville, dated Queen's Palace, February 12th, 1807.

9. Note from Lord Grenville to the King, dated 12th February, 1807 transmitting Nos. 10 and 11.

10. Despatch from the Lord Lieutenant, dated 10th February, 1807. Received the 12th.

11. Minute of Cabinet of the 12th February, 1807.

12. Despatch from the Lord Lieutenant, dated 17th February, 1807.

13. Despatch from the Lord Lieutenant, dated 18th of February, 1807. Received the 21st.

14. Despatch from Viscount Howick to the Lord Lieutenant, dated 3rd March, 1807, transmitting copies of five clauses marked P. Q. R. S. T., proposed to be introduced into the Mutiny Bill. Draft thereof, with the enclosures, sent down to the King on the 2nd of March, and returned on the 3rd.

15. Note from Lord Grenville to the King, dated 15th of March, 1807; transmitting No. 16.

16. Minute of Cabinet of the 15th March, 1807.

17. Note from the King to Lord Grenville, dated the 17th of March, transmitting No. 18.

18. Note from the King in answer to No. 15, dated Windsor Castle, 17th of March, 1807.

19. Note from Lord Grenville to the King, dated 18th of March, 1807, half-past one A. M., transmitting No. 20.

20. Minute of Cabinet, dated March 17th, 1807.

I.

St. James's Place,
February 9. 1807.

EARL SPENCER has the honour to lay before Your Majesty a despatch received from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland relating to the proceedings which have lately taken place among certain of the Catholicks in that country; together with a minute agreed upon by Your Majesty's servants, to be humbly submitted to Your Majesty with the draft of an answer to the Lord Lieutenant's despatch, referred to in the said minute.

II.

(*Secret.*)

Dublin Castle,
February 4. 1807.

MY LORD,

About a month ago I heard that a few of the Roman Catholicks in the city of Dublin were beginning to discuss in private the expediency of petitioning Parliament at this time for relief from the restrictions to which they are subject under the existing laws. After one or two meetings held by a very few persons to deliberate on the subject, a publick meeting was assembled, at

which fifty or sixty persons attended; when the question was considered and it was unanimously resolved that this was a fit time to petition for relief, and that a deputation of four persons, whom they chose by ballot, should ask an interview with Mr. Elliot in behalf of the Catholicks of Dublin, to know whether it was the intention of His Majesty's Ministers to support a bill in Parliament in support of the Catholick body. The deputies were Lord Ffrench, Mr. John Keogh, Mr. O'Connor (a country gentleman of some fortune), Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Lubb, two wealthy persons in the rank of tradesmen in the city of Dublin. Some days afterwards these persons waited upon Mr. Elliot, and communicated to him the resolutions of the meeting. Mr. Keogh, a man of considerable talent and property, entered at large into the subject, stated the different restrictions to which the Catholicks were still liable, and how they were affected by them in their feelings and interests; that while they laboured under these mortifying and disadvantageous restrictions, a certain degree of discontent must prevail among the great body of the people, whom, in the present state of Europe, it was peculiarly desirable to conciliate and cordially unite in defence of the empire. And on this ground he considered the present a

favourable moment for presenting this petition. Mr. Elliot informed them he could return no answer to this question without communicating with me on the subject, which he should take an early opportunity of doing. This answer was reported to a second meeting, held the next day, which, without any debate, adjourned to a further day, to allow of time for my answer. From the best information I could obtain of what had passed at this meeting, I collected that many were of opinion that they should relinquish their intention of petitioning, provided some of the existing restrictions were removed; although some others maintained that they ought to persist in their intention of petitioning, unless complete relief was unequivocally promised.

After the maturest deliberation, I thought it impossible, under all circumstances, to return any other answer than that I should communicate this resolution to His Majesty's Ministers in England. Mr. Elliot sent for the deputies and delivered the answer to them; upon which occasion little more was said by them than that they should report the answer they had received at their next meeting, which was to take place a few days afterwards. On the third meeting the deputies reported my answer delivered to them by Mr. Elliot; and I am informed that the

meeting, after appointing a committee of twenty-one to prepare a petition, as a measure of precaution in case an unfavourable answer was received from England, adjourned to the 7th instant. By this time it appeared that the question had become a more general subject of conversation and interest among the Catholicks. Lord Fingal and Sir Edward Bellew called upon Mr. Elliot, and requested of him, in behalf of themselves and those Catholicks who acted usually with them, and on all occasions have manifested great moderation, whether it was the intention of Government to grant any relief to the Roman Catholicks this session of Parliament. They intimated that if they could receive any satisfactory assurance on this subject, they thought the intention of petitioning might not be persevered in; but that if they could receive no such assurance they thought it right to apprise him that at a general meeting of the Catholicks which was intended to be held very soon, this subject would be taken into consideration; and that the measure of petitioning would most probably be adopted by every branch of the Catholick body. Mr. Elliot gave the same answer he had the day before returned to the deputies from the Catholicks of Dublin.

I ought to acquaint your Lordship that Lord Fingal, Sir Edward Bellew, Lord Gormanstown,

Lord Southwell, and some other persons of rank and consequence of the Catholick persuasion, had been repeatedly solicited by letters to attend the meetings of the Catholicks of Dublin; and they had all declined it, but in terms of great civility. Several of the most respectable Catholick merchants in Dublin also kept away from these meetings. One or two of these were, notwithstanding, appointed of the committee of twentyone to prepare the petition.

Lord Fingal, immediately after he had seen Mr. Elliot, called by publick advertisement a general meeting of the Roman Catholicks for the 9th instant. His lordship and the other Catholicks who usually act with him, do not appear to have been zealous for the agitation of the question at this moment; but they probably think it cannot be prevented, and prefer joining in the discussion to being entirely separated from the rest of their body. As many of those persons who have expressed any opinion on the subject have insinuated, I understand, in their speeches, that some concessions might induce them to relinquish their present intention of petitioning only, I have endeavoured to learn what concessions they have particularly in view. And from all I can collect, the concessions appear to be, the removal of all restrictions from the Catholick service, and promotion in the army; the

removal of the incapacity of persons of that persuasion to serve the office of sheriff; and, lastly, the facilitating their admission into corporations. I cannot venture to form a positive opinion that any or all of these concessions will be sufficient to prevent their proceeding with their petition: I can only say that, if they were gratified in these points, I think there is a reasonable chance that the petition would be relinquished; at least, such is I conceive the present disposition of many persons who have taken a share in these discussions. Your lordship will allow me to add that as speedy an answer as may be compatible with the importance of the subject is highly essential.

With great truth,

(Signed) BEDFORD.

To the Earl Spencer, K. G.

III.

At the Earl Spencer's.

February 9. 1807.

PRESENT.

The Lord President; The Lord Privy Seal; Earl Spencer; Earl Moira; Viscount Howick; Lord Henry Petty; Lord Grenville; Mr. Secretary Windham; Mr. Grenville.

Your Majesty's servants upon consideration of the despatch received from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, of the 4th inst. respecting the proceedings of certain of the Catholicks of Ireland, and the communications made by them to Your Majesty's Government, beg here to submit to Your Majesty their humble opinion that it may be proper that the answer, a draft of which is herewith humbly submitted to Your Majesty, should be sent to the Lord Lieutenant with instructions to conform his conduct to what is therein stated.

IV.

(*Secret.*)

Whitehall,
February 12. 1807.

My Lord,

Your Grace's despatch of the 4th instant has been considered by His Majesty's servants with all the attention due to the extreme importance of the subject to which it relates; and it is, in conformity to this opinion humbly submitted to His Majesty, that I am now authorized to transmit to your Grace the following instructions for the regulation of any communication your Grace and Mr. Elliot may hold on this business with any of the King's Catholick subjects in Ireland. It

will be in your Grace's recollection that a petition was, in the session before last, presented to the Parliament in behalf of the Irish Catholicks, with a view to the extension of the privileges which have been granted to them at different periods during His Majesty's reign. The subject was on that occasion fully and deliberately discussed. The opinions of many of the persons whom His Majesty has since been pleased to call to his councils, were, as it is well known, declared to be entirely in favour of the measure, as one which would in their judgment essentially promote the safety and welfare of the empire, and contribute to the preservation of its established constitution in Church and State. But it cannot be disputed that the general sense of Parliament in both Houses was decidedly adverse to the concessions which were then in view. *Whatever may be the individual opinions which His Majesty's servants respectively hold as to the merits of the question, those who are most favourable to the measure see no reason to believe that any such change has in this short interval taken place as to afford the smallest probability that it could at this time be successfully proposed to Parliament, and are of opinion that, without such hope, the renewal of this question within so short a period after it has been solemnly considered and decided can tend to no*

publick good, and is not likely to promote either the general advantage of the empire or of the particular class of the King's subjects to whom it more immediately relates. This opinion they feel it their duty to desire your Grace will express on their part, and in the strongest terms, to all those with whom your Grace may communicate on the subject, and especially to those with whom their judgment is likely to have any weight on such a question.

Your Grace will be particularly careful to avoid any appearance of offering, as the price of their forbearance in this respect, any part of those indulgences which, on other grounds, they have judged it advisable to submit to His Majesty as proper to be now proposed to Parliament. Before they had been apprised of any of the recent discussions, they had already had under their consideration the inconvenient and contradictory provisions of the present laws, in as far as they affect the King's Catholick subjects in Ireland, with respect to their serving in His Majesty's naval and military forces. Your Grace is well aware that at the time when His Majesty was graciously pleased to recommend to the consideration of the Irish Parliament the situation of his Catholick subjects, it was intended that these professions should be opened to them universally, and under such restrictions only as are expressed in the Irish

Act of Parliament, 33 of George III. c. 21; and this intention was openly held out to them, and was declared in the two Houses of Parliament by the late Earl of Clare, then Lord Chancellor, and the present Earl of Buckinghamshire, then Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. But the effect of the Irish Act of Parliament which was passed for this purpose, could apply only to the removal of the legal restrictions and disabilities existing in that kingdom; it could not operate in Great Britain, and no particular (*forsan*, similar) Acts having been proposed here, the consequence is that, in the two parts of the United Kingdom, the law is totally different in this respect, and that in Ireland, where alone, if there were any danger from the employment of Catholicks as officers, that danger could be felt, the King's subjects of every description are capable of holding any military grade whatever, except that of a general in the staff, while in Great Britain, where no such danger can exist, and where the whole country is decidedly Protestant, not even the lowest commission can be held by a Catholick officer; a circumstance leading to this striking inconvenience and absurdity, that either the intention of the Act passed in the Irish Parliament must be totally frustrated and the Irish Catholick gentry remain excluded from the army, or else that a regiment, legally officered

in Ireland, cannot be ordered from thence to this part of the United Kingdom, in a moment of the most urgent danger, without exposing many of its officers to the necessity of either violating the laws, or quitting the service in which they have been educated, and in which probably the greater part of their lives has been devoted. In addition to these two considerations, of the faith of Government positively pledged, and of the manifest incongruity of the present system, His Majesty's servants are deeply impressed with a sense of the great advantage of enabling all the King's subjects to contribute equally in the moment of common danger to the military defence of every part of the empire, and of affording to the sons of the gentry of Ireland the means of displaying in the cause of the United Kingdom those military talents by which they have in all ages been distinguished, and of their bearing their share both in the danger and the glory of that great interest in which we are now embarked. On these grounds it is that His Majesty's servants have thought it expedient that, in the Mutiny Bill, to be this year proposed to Parliament, a clause should be offered for enabling His Majesty, whenever he shall deem it advisable, to confer any *military commission* whatever on any of his liege subjects, such commission to be lawfully exercised in all places within and

without the empire, and under no other condition than that of taking such oath of allegiance as shall be provided in order to evince their attachment to His Majesty's person, family, and government, and to the vital constitution of this United Kingdom; and another clause will in that case become necessary, in order to give all H. M. subjects, however employed in any of his forces, a legal right to that full toleration as to the exercise of their religious professions which, by the practice of the army and by the just and liberal orders by which it is governed, they now enjoy, but for which it would unquestionably be proper that they should have the security of the laws.

These regulations, if thus adopted, must of course, in order to their continuance, be annually renewed in Parliament, which would thus be every year enabled to meet any inconvenience to which such a concession could by any possibility give rise. But His Majesty's servants feel the fullest confidence that it would on the contrary be, in every possible view of the subject, productive of the greatest benefit to the publick service.

This intention your Grace is therefore authorized to announce to any of the King's Catholick subjects with whom you may communicate, as a step taken for the views of justice, policy, and consistency, which so manifestly recommend it.

But as I have before explained, *it is judged highly important that you should declare that it is not adopted in any view of compromise, or with any purpose of thereby obtaining the abandonment of any projected petition to Parliament; a measure which the King's servants think highly unadvisable, and the agitation of which at the present moment could not fail, in the opinion even of those who are most favourable to the present question, to be attended with effects injurious to the interests of the empire, and to those of the Roman Catholicks themselves, but which they would not seek to avert by partial concessions.*

The objection to the proposal of opening to the Catholicks by Act of Parliament the office of sheriff will obviously appear from what has been already said. This measure, comparatively of such inferior importance, could not be proposed without the agitation in Parliament of the whole subject, nor consequently without all the mischief attendant on an adverse discussion of the claims and wishes of the Catholicks.

With respect to the admission of Catholicks into corporations, the King's servants are not aware of any law existing in Ireland, by which they are now excluded; nor consequently does it appear in what manner or to what effect the interference of Government is wished for on the subject.

In as far as relates to the execution of existing laws, your Grace is already fully apprised of the anxious desire which the King's servants entertain that the Catholicks should practically enjoy all the advantages to which His Majesty's gracious recommendation and the liberality of Parliament have successively entitled them; and I am too well acquainted with the perfect conformity of opinion which prevails between your Grace and the King's servants here met, not to be quite certain that the whole tenour of your Grace's conduct has been entirely consonant to this principle, and has already impressed upon the minds of all temperate and reasonable men the fullest conviction that such is the rule by which the King's government in Ireland is actually administered; a course to which the King's servants wish that the most decided adherence should continue to be manifested.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SPENCER.

To His Grace the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

V.

Windsor Castle,
February 10. 1807.

THE KING has received Earl Spencer's letter transmitting a minute of the Cabinet, with a despatch from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the draft of the proposed answer to which it refers. Whilst His Majesty approves of that part of the answer which instructs the Lord Lieutenant to keep back any petition from the Roman Catholicks of Ireland, and to prevent the renewal of the question upon which His Majesty's sentiments and the general sense of the country have already been so clearly pronounced, the King cannot but express the most serious concern that any proposal should have been made to him for the introduction of a clause in the Mutiny Bill which would remove a restriction upon the Roman Catholicks, forming in his opinion a most essential part of the question, and so strongly connected with the whole that the King trusts his Parliament never would, under any circumstances, agree to it. His Majesty's objections to this proposal do not result from any slight motive; they have never varied; for they arise from the principles by which he has been guided through life, and to which he is determined to adhere. On this question a line has been drawn from which he cannot depart; nor can Earl Spencer be

surprised that such should be His Majesty's feelings; as he cannot have forgotten what occurred when the subject was brought forward some years ago. He had hoped in consequence that it would never again have been agitated.

(Signed) GEORGE R.

VI.

Downing Street,
February 10. 1807.

LORD GRENVILLE begs leave humbly to submit to Your Majesty the enclosed minute drawn at the meeting of the Cabinet this evening. Earl Spencer's health is not yet sufficiently restored to allow his attendance; but Lord Grenville is confident that Lord Spencer fully participates in the sentiments which the rest of His Majesty's servants have ventured to express. Lord Grenville feels that it is, in some degree, presumption in him to think that any individual representation on his part can add weight to that of Your Majesty's Cabinet; and yet he cannot refrain from adding the earnest entreaties of an attached and faithful servant, that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to bestow on this paper that full consideration which he trusts it merits, not less from the spirit in

which it is drawn, than from the extreme importance of the object which it has in view. He can faithfully assure Your Majesty that it was his most earnest wish, and that, as he implicitly believes, of all Your Majesty's servants, that every discussion should be avoided which could in the remotest degree be painful to any feelings, or repugnant to any opinions of Your Majesty; and this object they hoped they had attained in the measure which they took the liberty to suggest, when the circumstances of the times, and the considerations due to the peace and union of the empire, no longer left any possibility of postponing the consideration of a question so importunately pressed forward by others. The measure in question, so far from being in opposition to any known or expressed opinion of Your Majesty, is perfectly conformable in its principles to that concession to which Your Majesty had long ago been pleased most graciously to consent. And while the exercise of the power to be conferred is lodged solely in Your Majesty's hands, and a reserve made for the annual exercise of the discretion of Parliament with respect to the continuance of that power, Lord Grenville flatters himself that it is impossible any evil can result from it to the security of the principles and establishments to which he is as warmly and conscien-

tiously attached as any other of Your Majesty's subjects.

On the other hand, the advantage is beyond all calculation of recruiting Your Majesty's army by the superabundance of that population which from the want of such a vent is now too frequently engaged in acts of turbulence and disorder at home; of adding to the publick strength by the very measure which will contribute to the publick tranquillity, and by employing against the enemy abroad the very same hands that would very possibly be raised in his support were he to succeed in landing an army in Ireland.

In like manner with respect to the officers, Lord Grenville is persuaded no measure could more effectually promote the interests of the empire than one which will accustom the gentry in Ireland to look for their promotion and advancement in life to Your Majesty's service, and which, by mixing them in habits of intercourse with the great body of Your Majesty's officers, will gradually infuse into their minds the same spirit and principles by which that body is animated.

Of the sincerity of these opinions Your Majesty cannot doubt. Nothing but a deep impression of the indispensable necessity of some step of this nature at the present moment, and

the peculiar advantage of the measure now recommended in its tendency to prevent difficulties of the most embarrassing nature, could induce Lord Grenville to think himself warranted in recommending it with such extreme earnestness. And whatever may be Your Majesty's ultimate decision on this occasion, he is persuaded that Your Majesty's condescension and goodness will attribute this freedom to its only true motive.

VII.

Downing Street,
February 10. 1807.

PRESENT.

Lord Chancellor; Lord President; Lord Privy Seal; Earl Moira; Viscount Howick; Lord Henry Petty; Lord Grenville; Lord Ellenborough; Mr. Secretary Windham; Mr. Grenville.

It is with the deepest and most unfeigned regret that Your Majesty's servants learn that the proposed despatch to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has not in all its parts been honoured with that approbation from Your Majesty which they had allowed themselves to hope for, and which they still flatter themselves, it may ultimately obtain from Your Majesty's gracious consideration

of what they now beg leave to submit. They can assure Your Majesty with the utmost sincerity that it had been their anxious endeavour so to frame the proposed instruction as that it might be entirely free from the difficulties that might attend other parts of a question on which, as Your Majesty knows, a difference of opinion prevails among the persons whom Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to call to your councils, and on which they are all aware of the sentiment which Your Majesty has at former periods expressed. They had persuaded themselves that in the clauses to be proposed for the Mutiny Bill, Your Majesty would be of opinion that they are only fulfilling the engagements which had formerly been entered into under Your Majesty's authority, and carrying into effect a principle which has already received the fullest and most formal sanction by the Act passed in the Irish Parliament in the thirty-second year of Your Majesty's reign. That Act enables Your Majesty's Catholick subjects in Ireland to hold commissions in Your Majesty's army, with no other restriction than is there pointed out; and if a similar provision be refused to this part of the now United Kingdom, it appears obvious that the grace conferred by Your Majesty on that large body of Your Majesty's

Catholick subjects in Ireland must be rendered wholly illusory, and an appearance given of a conduct on the part of Your Majesty's Government not consistent with Your Majesty's uniform and paternal beneficence towards your people, or with that openness and good faith with which Your Majesty always wishes that your servants should conduct themselves in all the transactions of your Government. In addition to these considerations, they beg leave to represent to Your Majesty with the most profound deference, and at the same time with the utmost earnestness, that the formidable dangers which now surround the country, from a state of affairs in Europe almost unparalleled, appear to them to impose upon them the indispensable duty of proposing to Parliament to unite in the common cause the military efforts of the whole population of Your Majesty's empire, and to secure the best interests of their country from ultimately sinking under the increased preponderance of France. The absence and want of such aid would, in such a moment, be deeply felt. But Your Majesty's servants fear that a still greater danger might result from conveying to so considerable a body of Your Majesty's subjects an impression which must follow from a decided refusal to admit them to a full share in the military defence of their country.

In such circumstances, Your Majesty's servants would think themselves deeply criminal if they could disguise this peril from Your Majesty, or if they could neglect to offer to Parliament a proposal which they respectfully conceive is not liable to the objection which Your Majesty appears at first view to have felt to it; which, *in its principle*, is already sanctioned by a law long since passed and acted upon in many instances; which, in its form would continually keep the subject in the controul and care of Parliament, to whom it must be annually submitted; and *which, while it appears to them the measure the best calculated to avert the dangers which they have humbly represented to Your Majesty, affords at the same time the most probable means of preventing the agitation of those questions on which the opinion of Parliament has been so recently pronounced.*

VIII.

Queen's Palace,
February 12. 1807.

THE King has maturely considered what is stated in Lord Grenville's letter of the 10th instant, and the accompanying minute of Cabinet. He is disposed in this, as in all other instances, to do full justice to the motives which influence any

advice which may be submitted to him by Lord Grenville and his other confidential servants; and however painful His Majesty has found it to reconcile to his feelings the removal of objections to any proposal which may have even the most distant reference to a question which has already been the subject of such frequent and distressing reflection, he will not, under the circumstances in which it is so earnestly pressed, and adverting particularly to what passed in 1791, prevent his Ministers submitting to the consideration of Parliament the propriety of inserting the proposed clause in the Mutiny Bill. While, however, the King so far reluctantly concedes, he considers it necessary to declare that he cannot go one step further; and he trusts that this proof of his forbearance will secure him from being at a future period distressed by any further proposal connected with this question.

(Signed) G. R.

IX.

Downing Street,
February 12. 1807.

LORD GRENVILLE begs leave, in the absence of Earl Spencer, most humbly to submit to Your Majesty the minute of the meeting of Your

Majesty's confidential servants, together with the despatch from the Lord Lieutenant to which it refers, and which Lord Grenville has read with great concern.

X.

(*Secret.*)

Dublin Castle,
February 10. 1807.

My Lord,

The meeting of the Catholicks summoned by Lord Fingal met yesterday, and his lordship was put in the chair. I understand about two hundred persons attended, among whom were many county gentlemen, and some of them from a considerable distance, and also some of the most eminent Catholick merchants of this city, who had not attended any of the former meetings.

Mr. Keogh, it is said, made a long speech, in which he insisted on the same topicks that he had stated in a former speech, adding that, from all the circumstances under which the present application was made, he could not help indulging a sanguine hope that everything would be conceded but seats in Parliament. There appearing no difference of opinion, little more was said, and on his motion, it was unanimously resolved that

this was a fit and proper time to present a petition to Parliament in behalf of the Catholicks of Ireland, and that the committee of twenty-one should be re-appointed, which, with the Catholick peers and baronets and twenty-one country gentlemen, should be a committee to prepare a petition to the Imperial Parliament, and report the same to a meeting to be held on Tuesday, the 17th instant, to which day the meeting then adjourned.

With great truth, &c.

(Signed) BEDFORD.

T the Earl Spencer, K.G.

XI.

Downing Street,
February 12. 1807.

PRESENT.

The Lord Chancellor; Lord President; Lord Privy Seal; Earl Moira; Viscount Howick; Lord Henry Petty; Lord Grenville; Lord Ellenborough; Mr. Secretary Windham; Mr. Grenville.

YOUR Majesty's confidential servants humbly beg leave to express to Your Majesty their grateful acknowledgments for Your Majesty's most grate-

ful communication received this day by Lord Grenville, and the deep sense they entertain of the favourable opinion which Your Majesty is pleased to express of the motives which will always regulate any advice which it may be their duty to submit to Your Majesty. They trust that they shall not be disappointed in their hope of beneficial consequences to result from the measure to which Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to consent; and they humbly entreat Your Majesty to believe that they have no object more at heart than the endeavouring by all means consistent with the faithful and conscientious discharge of their duties to Your Majesty to avert from Your Majesty every circumstance that can in any manner be painful to Your Majesty's feelings. Your Majesty's servants are the more anxious to express this assurance, because it appears from the despatch just transmitted by the Lord Lieutenant, that there is now scarcely a hope left of preventing the immediate presentation of a petition on the part of the Catholicks to Parliament; *a circumstance of great difficulty and embarrassment in every view of the question.*

XII.

[Read by the King.]

(*Secret.*)

Dublin Castle,
February 17. 1807.

My Lord,

I had the honour of receiving on Saturday afternoon your Lordship's despatch of the 12th instant; and Lord Fingal and Lord Ffrench having repeatedly expressed great anxiety to be made acquainted as soon as possible with the answer I should receive from His Majesty's Ministers, Mr. Elliot requested them, and the other gentlemen appointed by the Catholick meeting to communicate with Government on this occasion, to come to him yesterday. The Lords Fingal and Ffrench, and I believe all the other persons except Mr. Keogh, who did not attend, met Mr. Elliot in the presence of the Chancellor. Mr. Elliot stated to them, according to the tenour of your Lordship's instructions that, after the very full and deliberate discussion of the Catholick question in Parliament in the year 1805, on which occasion the opinions of many of the persons forming a part of the present Administration were declared

to be in favour of the measure, as tending in their judgment essentially to promote the safety and prosperity of the empire, and to the preservation of the established Constitution both in Church and State, and the general sense of both Houses was so decidedly declared to be adverse to the concessions which were then in view, whatever might be the individual sentiments which His Majesty's Ministers respectively hold on this subject, those even who were most favourable to the measure saw no reason to believe that any such change had in this short interval taken place, as to afford the smallest chance that it would at this time be successfully proposed to Parliament. And they were of opinion, and the Lord Lieutenant most sincerely concurred with them, that the renewal of this question, so soon after the very solemn decision in 1805, was not likely to promote either the general advantage of the empire, or the particular interest of that class of the King's subjects to which it more immediately related. Mr. Elliot then proceeded to mention that the Lord Lieutenant had authorized him to mention that His Majesty's Ministers, antecedent to their recent discussions, and without any reference to or connection with them, had taken under their consideration the incongruous and defective state of the law respecting the admission of Catholicks into

His Majesty's naval and military forces; that in 1793 the then Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords, and Lord Buckinghamshire, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, in the House of Commons, had declared that it was intended, under such restrictions only as are expressed in the Irish Act of Parliament 33 of George III. c. 21, to open those professions to the Catholicks of Ireland everywhere; but that the Act of the Irish Parliament passed for this purpose could give effect to the concession only within Ireland; and therefore, to supply this defect, and to fulfil the intention thus publickly manifested in 1793, His Majesty's Ministers proposed to offer a clause in the Mutiny Bill to enable His Majesty to confer *any military commission whatever* on any of his liege subjects. And to render effectual this measure of the year 1793, it was further proposed to give a legal right to all persons so employed to the free exercise and full toleration of their religion, which they at present enjoy only from the liberal practice of the service.

In pursuance of your Lordship's instructions, Mr. Elliot repeated to them that the measure for correcting the defect in the Act of the year 1793 and fulfilling the intention then held out, was proposed to be taken solely on the views of policy, justice, and consistency, and was not connected

with, and did not in any degree result from, the recent discussions; and strongly impressed upon them that it was not adopted with a view to a compromise, or to procure the abandonment of any intended petition to Parliament—a measure which His Majesty's Ministers and the Lord Lieutenant thought highly unadvisable, and the agitation of which, at the present moment, could not fail, in the opinion even of those who were most favourable to their claims, to be attended with effects injurious to the interests of the empire and to those of the Catholicks themselves. Lord Ffrench stated that in the year 1793 corporations and the Bank were promised to be opened to them. The Chancellor observed that the present Bank Charter did not allow of the admission of Catholicks into the direction. And Lord Ffrench replied, he only wished the point to be kept in mind when the Charter should come to be renewed. Mr. O'Connor asked *if the Catholicks were to be capable of being appointed Generals on the Staff.* Mr. Elliot answered, he could only say it was proposed to enable His Majesty to confer *any commission whatever on any of his subjects.* Mr. Elliot concluded the conversation by saying that he trusted it was superfluous to add, that it had been the anxious wish of His Majesty's Government to administer the existing laws in such a manner as that His

Majesty's Catholick subjects might enjoy all the advantages to which they are entitled; and that he had the Lord Lieutenant's commands to assure them that this principle should continue the invariable rule of his conduct. The Catholick gentlemen received this communication without expressing any opinion upon it, or in any way manifesting whether it was satisfactory to themselves, or whether they thought it likely to give satisfaction to the Catholick body at large. On consultation with the Chancellor, it was thought that the earliest communication of your Lordship's answer was necessary; as there was to be a meeting to-day, and it had been rumoured that at such meeting it was very probable the measure of petitioning would be finally adopted, unless the answer from England should be of a nature to induce them to relinquish the petition altogether.

With great truth, &c.

(Signed) BEDFORD.

To the Earl Spencer, K.G.

XIII.

[Read by the King.]

(*Secret.*)

My Lord,

The Catholick Committee appointed to prepare a petition, met on Monday afternoon to receive from the persons sent for by Mr. Elliot the result of the communication from England. So far as I am able to learn, they stated that the naval and military services were to be opened to them on the ground of fulfilling the intention of Government in 1793, and not by way of compromise to purchase the abandonment of the petition; and also that His Majesty's Ministers are of opinion that agitating a petition in Parliament would at present be highly injurious to the empire and themselves, and that in this opinion the Lord Lieutenant had concurred. They represented to the committee that Mr. Elliot, in answer to Mr. O'Connor's question, mentioned in my former despatch, spoke doubtfully about situations on the Staff, although in this conversation to the committee, they seemed to think the words "any military situation whatever," used by Mr. Elliot, imported that such situations were to be opened to them. Lord Fingal, Lord Ffrench, and a very few others, en-

deavoured to persuade the committee to propose to the general meeting an adjournment for three weeks, on the ground of giving time for the Catholicks in the different counties to express their sentiments on the subject. But this proposition was very ill received, and the prevailing disposition was to proceed immediately to settle the terms of the petition, which was accordingly done yesterday. The meeting was attended by upwards of two hundred persons. After Lord Fingal had repeated the substance of Mr. Elliot's communication, Mr. Burke, a young man of considerable fortune, immediately proposed that the petition prepared by the committee should be read, and then that it should be adopted as the petition of the Catholicks in Ireland. Some debate arose. Lord Fingal again proposed an adjournment for three weeks, which was negatived almost unanimously. Several persons spoke, and, except two or three, all were for petitioning immediately. The same topicks were urged as at the former meetings; and little was said, I understand, about the indulgences now proposed to be granted them. They resolved that the petition should be presented this session, that it should be revised by the committee, and reported again on Tuesday next, the 24th instant, to which day they adjourned. Mr. Keogh, who had not attended the

committee at all because or on pretence of bad health, attended the meeting, and spoke, but with rather more moderation and caution in his expressions than on former occasions. It was generally understood that the Catholicks in the country would be solicited to concur in the petition, and that the approaching assizes would afford a convenient opportunity for the purpose.

With great truth, &c.

(Signed) BEDFORD.

To the Earl Spencer, K.G.

XIV.

Downing Street,
March 3. 1807.

MY LORD,

In the absence of Earl Spencer, who has obtained His Majesty's permission to go into the country for the recovery of his health, I have the honour of transmitting to your Grace copies of the clauses which it is intended to propose for insertion in the Mutiny Bill, respecting the admission of Catholicks into the army, and the securing to them the free-exercise of their religion. The clause respecting the admission of Catholicks into the army, your Grace will observe is in perfect conformity with, and almost in the words

of, Lord Spencer's despatch of the 12th ultimo, and will enable your Grace to confirm the explanation given by Mr. Elliot at the meeting which took place with the leaders of the Catholick body, as mentioned in your Grace's despatch of the 17th ultimo, in consequence of a question put to him by Mr. O' Connor as to the extent of the proposed measure; the new clause being so framed as to enable the Catholicks to hold *in common with the rest of His Majesty's subjects any military commission or appointment whatsoever* which His Majesty may be pleased to confer upon persons of that persuasion, under no other condition than that of taking the oath of allegiance and fidelity there provided, to evince their attachment to His Majesty's royal person and Government, and to the established Constitution of the United Kingdom agreeably to what is stated by your Grace in the above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HOWICK.

To His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, &c.

N. B.—This was sent in draft to the King on Monday night, March 2nd, and returned by His Majesty on Tuesday morning without any remark or objection; in consequence of which it was despatched to Ireland on that day. On the follow-

ing day — viz. Wednesday, March the 4th, both Lord Grenville and Lord Howick saw the King.

Lord Howick's audience was first: Lord Howick understood the King to express to him a repugnance to the measure, but to have agreed to his proposing it to Parliament; and immediately on his coming out of the closet, he so explained what had passed to Lord Grenville. In consequence of this Lord Grenville, who went in afterwards, did not touch at all upon the subject, *nor did His Majesty say anything to him upon it.*

Lord Howick that day made the motion in Parliament. It was not till the following Wednesday that His Majesty renewed the subject both to Lord Howick and Lord Grenville; and it then appeared that His Majesty conceived himself to have stated to Lord Howick that he did *not* consent to the proposed measure in Parliament

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Clause P.

And whereas it is expedient that His Majesty should be enabled to avail himself of the military services of all his liege subjects for maintaining the interest, honour, and independence of the British Empire: Be it therefore enacted that it shall and may be lawful for His Majesty to confer any military commission whatever upon

any of his liege subjects, without exception, any law, statute, or usage to the contrary notwithstanding; and that such commission or appointment shall and may be lawfully exercised in all places within and without His Majesty's dominions; provided that every such person shall within three months after his accepting the said commission or appointment take, make, and subscribe the following declaration and oath, to be engrossed on the back or at the foot of the commission or appointment granted, and to be there attested by the signature of the magistrate or officer in whose presence the same shall be subscribed, and by whom the said oath shall have been administered. . . . .

Clause Q.

And be it further enacted, that such oath and declaration may be administered and attested by any Court of Record, or Judge of such Court, or by any Justice of the Peace, or other magistrate having power to administer oaths in any part of His Majesty's dominions; and if the party taking and subscribing the same shall at the time of his taking and subscribing the same not be within His Majesty's dominions, the same may then be administered and attested by any general officer of His Majesty's forces: Providing always that in

this last case the person holding such commission or appointment shall within three months after his return to any part of His Majesty's dominions again take, make, and subscribe the same oath and declaration in presence of some Court of Record or magistrate as aforesaid.

Clause R.

And be it further enacted that no person having so taken, made, and subscribed such oath or declaration respectively as aforesaid, shall be liable to any penalties for having exercised any such commission or appointment, any law, statute, or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

Clause S.

And be it further enacted, that the said oath and declaration to be so taken, made, and subscribed, shall be in the words following — viz. "I *A. B.* being by this commission appointed to be [*here set forth the appointment*], do hereby solemnly promise and swear in the presence of Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Third; and that I will do my utmost to defend him against all treason and traitorous conspiracies, and against all attempts whatever that shall be

made against his person, crown, or dignity; and that I will to the utmost of my power resist all such treasons, conspiracies, or attempts, and will also disclose and make known the same as soon as they shall come to my knowledge. And I do also promise and swear that I will to the utmost of my power maintain and support the succession of the crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, as the same now stands limited by law; and that I will also to the utmost of my power maintain the established laws, constitution, and government of the said United Kingdom against all attempts that shall be made against the same."

Clause T.

And whereas it is expedient that His Majesty's subjects, however employed in any of His Majesty's forces, should be allowed the free exercise of such religious opinions as they may respectively possess: Be it enacted that no person employed in His Majesty's forces, and having previously made known to his commanding officer his dissent from the doctrine or worship of the Established Church, shall under any pretence or by any means be prevented from attending the worship or service of his religious persuasion at proper and seasonable times, and so as shall be

consistent with the due discharge of his military duties, or shall be compelled to attend any service of the Established Church. And that any commissioned officer acting in violation of this provision shall, upon conviction thereof before a general court martial, be liable to be suspended or dismissed from His Majesty's service, or to such other punishment as the said court shall award; and that any warrant or non-commissioned officer so offending shall be liable to such punishment (not extending to life or limb) as shall be awarded by a general or regimental court martial.

XV.

Downing Street,
March 15. 1807.

LORD GRENVILLE has the honour most humbly to submit to Your Majesty a minute containing the opinion of such of Your Majesty's servants as are therein named, respecting the matter of the bill which has been proposed to Parliament. The pressure of the subject is in every view of it so great, that Lord Grenville trusts Your Majesty will excuse his taking the liberty of presenting himself at Windsor to-morrow for the purpose of

giving any explanation which Your Majesty may deem necessary on this important occasion. Lord Grenville will be in attendance on Your Majesty's commands as soon as he can after 10 o'clock; and he has ventured to mention that hour, because he is under the necessity of attending the House of Lords on the Scotch Judicature Bill.

XVI.

Downing Street,
March 15. 1807.

PRESENT.

Lord Privy Seal; Earl Moira; Viscount Howick; Lord Henry Petty; Lord Grenville; Mr. Secretary Windham; Mr. Grenville.

YOUR Majesty's servants now present, being those whose opinions are favourable to the bill now depending in Parliament, beg leave humbly to submit to Your Majesty that, on a full consideration of all the circumstances connected with that bill, they do not intend that any further proceedings on it shall be had on their part in Parliament. *This determination proceeds entirely from the same motives which have induced them to abstain from bringing forward other and more ex-*

tensive measures connected with the same subject, and which would in their opinion be highly advantageous to the publick interests. They had flattered themselves that the present proposal might not have encountered the same difficulties which attend the measures to which they allude. But as this hope appears to have been founded on a misunderstanding, they judge it on the whole more consonant to their publick duty not to press forward any further the discussion of the present bill.

They have thought this course of proceeding would be both more respectful to Your Majesty and more advantageous to the publick interest, than any attempt to alter the bill so as to bring it nearer to the strict letter of the Irish Act. The points of difference which exist between that law and the present bill, relate to matters the consideration of which, as it appears to them, it is almost impossible to separate from the measure itself. And they have found the attempt impracticable to reduce the bill to such a form as would, on the one hand, be likely to obviate the difficulties which now obstruct its success, and as would, on the other hand, be at all satisfactory for them to propose. *In stating to Parliament the determination to make this very painful sacrifice to what they conceive to be their painful duty, they*

trust Your Majesty will see the indispensable necessity of their expressing with the same openness by which their language on that subject has uniformly been marked, the strong persuasion which each of them individually entertains of the advantages which would result to the empire from a different course of policy towards the Catholicks of Ireland. These opinions they have never concealed from Your Majesty. They continue strongly impressed with them; and it is obviously indispensable to their publick character that they should openly avow them both on the present occasion and in the possible event of the discussion of the Catholick Petition in Parliament, a discussion which they have all equally endeavoured TO PREVENT; *on which, if it should be forced upon them, there might not be a perfect uniformity of conduct between them, but in which the adherence of them all to their former opinions must naturally be declared.*

They beg leave to add, that they cannot look without great uneasiness and apprehension at the present state of Ireland, which they consider as the only vulnerable part of the British Empire. The situation of that country is, as they fear, likely to force itself more and more on the consideration of Your Majesty's Government and of Parliament; and it is essential, not only to their own characters, but also, as they sincerely believe,

to the publick interest, that the deference which they have felt it their duty to show on this occasion to the opinions and feelings of Your Majesty, should not be understood as restraining them from submitting from time to time, as their duty is, *for Your Majesty's decision*, such measures respecting that part of your United Kingdom, as the course of circumstances shall appear to require.

They have only further most humbly to assure Your Majesty that in discharging that and every other part of their duty, so long as Your Majesty shall think fit to honour them with your confidence, nothing shall be omitted on their parts which can best testify their invariable and respectful attachment to Your Majesty, and *their sincere and anxious concern for Your Majesty's personal ease and comfort*, and for the prosperity and honour of Your Majesty's Government.

XVII.

Windsor Castle,
March 17. 1807.

THE King has lost no time in dictating the answer to the minute of Cabinet. Lord Grenville will receive it enclosed; and His Majesty

desires he will communicate it to his colleagues, hinting at the same time that Lord Grenville will see the propriety, with a view to the prevention of all future mistakes, that when they shall have duly considered the latter part of His Majesty's answer, their determination should be stated on paper.

(Signed) GEORGE R.

XVIII.

Windsor Castle,
March 17. 1807.

THE King, having fully considered what is submitted in the minute of Cabinet which he received yesterday morning, desires Lord Grenville will communicate to those of his confidential servants who were present, his sentiments and observations upon the contents of that minute, as hereafter expressed. His Majesty has heard with satisfaction that they have determined not to press forward any further the discussion of the bill depending in Parliament; and he is sensible of the deference shown to his sentiments and his feelings. But he regrets that, while they have felt bound, as his Ministers, to adopt this line of

conduct, they should, as individuals, consider it necessary to submit to Parliament opinions which are known to be so decidedly contrary to his principles; at a moment, too, when it is the declared object of his Government not to encourage any disposition on the part of the Roman Catholicks of Ireland to prefer a petition to Parliament.

From the latter part of the minute the King must conclude that, although the bill now depending is dropped, they have been unable to make up their minds not to press upon him in future measures connected with a question which has already proved so distressing to him; nor can His Majesty conceal from them that this intimation on their part, unless withdrawn, will leave the matter in a state most embarrassing and unsatisfactory to him, and in his opinion not less to them. The King therefore considers it due to himself, and consistent with the fair and upright conduct which it has been and ever will be his object to observe towards every one, to declare at once most unequivocally that upon this subject his sentiments never can change; *that he cannot ever agree to any concessions to the Catholicks which his confidential servants may in future propose to him; and that under these circumstances, and after what has passed, his mind cannot be at ease unless he*

shall receive a positive assurance from them, which shall effectually relieve him from all future apprehension.

(Signed). GEORGE R.

XIX.

[*Deest.*]

XX.

At Earl Spencer's.

PRESENT.

The Lord Privy Seal; Earl Spencer; Earl Moira; Viscount Howick; Lord Henry Petty; Lord Grenville; Mr. Secretary Windham; Mr. Grenville.

YOUR Majesty's servants have considered with the most respectful and dutiful attention the answer which Your Majesty has done them the honour to return to their minute of the 15th instant.

They beg leave most humbly to represent to Your Majesty, that at the time *when Your Majesty was graciously pleased to call them to your*

councils, no assurance was required from them inconsistent with those duties which are inseparable from that station. Had any such assurance been then demanded, they must have expressed with all humility and duty the absolute impossibility of their thus fettering the free exertion of their judgment. Those who are entrusted by Your Majesty with the administration of your extensive empire, are bound by every obligation to submit to Your Majesty without reserve the best advice which they can frame to meet the various exigencies and dangers of the times. The situation of Ireland appears to Your Majesty's servants to constitute the most formidable part of the present difficulties of the empire. This subject must, as they conceive, require a continued and vigilant attention, and a repeated consideration of every fresh circumstance which may call for the interposition of Your Majesty's Government or of Parliament. In forbearing to urge any further, while employed in Your Majesty' service, a measure which would, in their judgment, have tended to compose the present uneasiness in Ireland, and have been productive of material benefit to the empire, they humbly submit to Your Majesty that they have gone to the utmost possible limits of their publick duty. But that it would be deeply criminal in them, with the

general opinions which they entertain on the subject, to bind themselves to withhold from Your Majesty, under all the various circumstances which may arise, those councils which may eventually appear to them indispensably necessary for the peace and tranquillity of Ireland, and for defeating the enterprises of the enemy against the very existence of Your Majesty's Empire.

Your Majesty's servants must ever deeply regret that any difficulty should arise on their part in giving the most prompt obedience to any demand which Your Majesty considers as indispensable to the ease of Your Majesty's mind. But it is not possible for them, consistently with any sense of those obligations which must always attach on the sworn councillors of Your Majesty, to withdraw a statement which was not made without the most anxious consideration of every circumstance which could be suggested by their earnest desire for Your Majesty's ease, comfort, and happiness; or to give assurances which would impose upon them a restraint incompatible with the faithful discharge of the most important duty which they owe to Your Majesty.

APPENDIX E.

BOOK IV. Page 240.

November, 1807.

STAHREMBERG by the first flag of truce received a despatch from Vienna and a letter from Metternich (Austrian ambassador at Paris) with instructions to require an explanation of the Court of Great Britain with regard to peace; to urge the necessity, for the good of Europe, of an immediate negotiation, and a conclusion of a maritime peace (which invidious expression was repeated frequently in the despatch), and to insist on an indemnity to the Danes and a reparation to Europe for the rights of nations insulted and injured by the transactions and declarations at Copenhagen.

If the demands were not complied with, or even if there were any delay in the answer, the Prince was directed to demand his passports and to leave England.

He however delivered a note of a much milder tendency, though requiring a declaration of the British Ministers' disposition to treat with France,

and urging the necessity of a *maritime peace* to the tranquillity and welfare of Europe.

To this Mr. Canning replied in a note dated three days after Prince Stahremberg's, that the King could not but be surprised at being requested to explain his sentiments when he had so frequently declared them; but that, in compliance with so unjust a request from a friendly power, he was ready to repeat that he was disposed to enter into negotiation for a peace; qualifying that assurance with such a general description of the peace which he was so disposed to conclude as is usual on such occasions, and as leaves the enemy, the mediator, and if printed, the publick, just as wise as they were before.

The Austrian Minister thought this vague compliance sufficient to justify his remaining; and excused his own conduct to his Court by affecting to entertain some hopes of negotiation, and his suppression of the most obnoxious topicks as well as the most offensive language contained in his instructions, by urging the certainty of immediate rupture, if urged in the tone dictated to him.

A despatch through another channel and in cypher, soon convinced him that he could not have offended at home by disobeying that part of his instructions, which forbade temporizing or

delay, and urged his immediate departure from London.

It appears that Metternich either thinks or affects to think Bonaparte sincere in his wishes for peace, and something like negotiation is said to be absolutely necessary to preserve to Austria the semblance of independence. Indeed, Lord Pembroke seems so conscious of her forlorn state that they say he advised the Court of Vienna to go to war with us rather than risk a breach with Bonaparte. In addition to these publick papers, the Austrian Minister has urged in private conversation the real and substantial advantages to Russia, Austria, and Europe, and therefore to Great Britain, of a peace, or at least a negotiation, and, with all his attachment to the cause in which they have been allied, seems persuaded that Canning, by entering into no particulars, by neither declaring the basis on which he will treat, nor explaining the terms which he would exact, puts his Government in the wrong, and gives Bonaparte once more the advantage of appearing to the world more pacifick in his inclinations than Great Britain.

Appendix F.

Annual Register of 1806, chap. ix.
See Page 74.

As the correspondence and intercourse, which took place between the Governments of France and England, though they lasted for no less than six months, were finally broken off, without any treaty of peace, a brief relation of the conduct and of the leading events of the negotiation, will be sufficient to explain the principles of the respective parties, and to ascertain the causes which led to the unfavourable termination of these important discussions. The sentiments of Mr. Fox on the subject of the war were generally known throughout his own country and Europe; and it was supposed, that he had selected the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with the hopes of being able to accomplish with greater facility the favourite object of his heart — a general and permanent peace. The period, however, at which he was at length called to His Majesty's councils, was peculiarly unfavourable to such an immediate overture to the French Government as, in any other circumstances, he would, no doubt, have wished to resort to. The recent successes

of the French had been so signal and decisive, that an overture would have appeared an acknowledgment of weakness rather than a desire of pacification. Sufficient time had scarcely elapsed since the battle of Austerlitz and treaty of Presburg, to ascertain the feelings of the Russian Government; and in addition to the difficulty of speculating upon the impressions which the late calamities might have produced on that distant Court, a change of administration was expected in that capital; any decided step, therefore, without previous concert with the new Ministers at Petersburgh, might become the cause or the pretext for some estrangement of that Cabinet. In this predicament Mr. Fox seems to have determined on making no direct overture to France, till some event might give rise to it, or at least till the views and wishes of the Court of Petersburgh had been fully ascertained, and the form, object, and nature of any negotiation previously concerted with that Cabinet. But the French Government, perhaps, sincerely desirous of putting an end to hostilities, or possibly deluded by an idle hope that Mr. Fox's strong inclination to peace would betray his prudence, and lead him to measures that would impair the stability of the connection between Russia and England, availed itself of the first opportunity of making direct

overtures for a negotiation. The circumstances from which they arose are too singular in themselves, and too honourable to the English Minister and nation, to be passed over in silence.

About ten days after Mr. Fox came into office *, he received a letter from a person calling himself Guillet de la Gevrillière, stating that he was arrived at Gravesend without a passport, and requesting Mr. Fox to send him one, as he had very lately left Paris, and had something to communicate, which would give Mr. Fox satisfaction. On receiving this letter, Mr. Fox gave orders through Sir Francis Vincent, Under-secretary of State, to Mr. Brooke of the Alien Office, to send for the man from Gravesend, and a private interview having been solicited, to bring him on his arrival in London to Mr. Fox's house in Arlington Street, instead of taking him to the Foreign Office. In consequence of these orders, the Frenchman was next morning carried to Mr. Fox's house, and there admitted by him alone into his closet; when after some unimportant conversation, he proceeded to the object of his journey, which was to inform Mr. Fox that a plan had been entered into for the assassination of Bonaparte, and a house hired at Passy, from

* Feb. 14.

which it could be carried into effect with certainty, and without risk. Surprised and confounded with the audacity of the villain, in making him the confidant of so execrable a design, Mr. Fox, without inquiring further into the particulars of the plot, instantly dismissed the Frenchman from his presence, and desired Mr. Brooke to send him as soon as possible out of the kingdom. But on reflection he ordered him afterwards to be detained, till such information could be given to the French Government, as might prevent the perpetration of his crime, if really projected; and with that view he transmitted to M. Talleyrand * a short and simple statement of the occurrence, and of what he had done thereupon.† The answer to this communication ‡ was a natural and well-turned compliment to the honour and generosity of Mr. Fox's character, and was accompanied by an extract from the Emperor's speech to the legislative body §, in

* Feb. 20.

† The Frenchman continued in custody till the 7th of March, when he was sent under the care of a messenger to Harwich, and embarked on board of a vessel bound for Husum. He had arrived at Gravesend in a vessel called the Toby, Van Zoust master, declared from Embden, under Prussian colours, but supposed to have come direct from Holland.

‡ March 5. § March 2.

order, as M. Talleyrand observed, "that Mr. Fox might know, if the advantages of peace were duly appreciated, on what terms it might be discussed." The extract was a simple offer "to conclude peace, taking for its basis the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens."

Mr. Fox considered this communication as a distinct overture, and proceeded to answer it in that frank and direct style, which is the characteristic of all his publick dispatches. He objected to the uncertainty of the basis of Amiens; the variety of modes in which it had been interpreted; and the delay, which the explanations on the meaning of it would unavoidably occasion, even if no other objection should exist. "The true basis of such a negotiation, he observed, between two great powers, equally despising every idea of chicane, would be the reciprocal recognition of the following principles; viz. that the object of both parties should be a peace, honourable for both and for their respective allies; and at the same time, of a nature to secure, as far as in their power, the future tranquillity of Europe."* He then proceeded to state the impossibility of treating, much less of concluding anything unless in concert with Russia, but suggested the practi-

* Mr. Fox to M. Talleyrand, March 26.

cability of some previous discussion of the principal points, and some provisional arrangements, while they were waiting for the actual intervention of that power; and he forestalled an objection, which might be made to his statement, founded on the few material points in issue between Russia and France, by insisting upon, and extolling the interest taken by that power in all that concerns the greater or less degree of independence enjoyed by the different princes and states of Europe. He ended this letter with an expression of his desire of peace, and a short but firm exposition of the ability of Great Britain to continue the contest.

A correspondence of some length ensued, in which, as M. Talleyrand observes, there is a character of openness and precision that had not hitherto been seen in the communications between the two Courts. The great difficulty consisted in the admission of Russia into the negotiation. M. Talleyrand endeavours with much ingenuity to represent that power as interposing its authority between two great nations fully competent to adjust their own differences, but Mr. Fox insists on her being a party in the question, and an ally of Great Britain, whose interests are inseparably connected with her own. To bring the discussion

to a point, Mr. Fox states explicitly *, that His Majesty was willing to negotiate conjointly with Russia, but would not consent to negotiate separately. A month elapsed without any answer being given to this dispatch, and the first overture may be said to have failed in consequence of the determination of England not to negotiate separately, and the unwillingness of France to admit the intervention of Russia. But, though no arrangement took place, "the spirit of conciliation manifested on both sides, was considered as a great advance to peace †;" and in the course of the month of May, the English Cabinet were, no doubt, enabled to ascertain with greater precision, the views and intentions of the Court of St. Petersburgh, and enabled to determine how far the substance and advantage of a joint negotiation might be preserved, without insisting on the forms, to which France seemed to feel so much repugnance.

Whether M. Talleyrand calculated on the probability of such communications between the two Courts, or was only anxious to prolong a correspondence, which might ultimately lead to a negotiation, he wrote a letter on the 2nd of June,

* Mr. Fox to M. Talleyrand, April 20.

† Id. to Id., April 8.

in the form of an answer to Mr. Fox's dispatch of the 20th of April, in which, after some vague observations on the nature of alliances, and some trivial objections to a joint negotiation, he proposes, — "first, to negotiate in the same preliminary forms, which were adopted during the Administration of the Marquis of Rockingham, in 1782; forms, which were not renewed with so much advantage in the negotiations of Lisle, but which were perfectly successful in the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Amiens; — secondly, to establish as a basis two fundamental principles; the first, taken from Mr. Fox's letter of the 26th of March, — namely, "*That the two states should have for their object, that the peace be honourable for them and their respective allies, and at the same time, of a nature to secure, as far as it is in their power, the future tranquillity of Europe;*" the second principle to be an acknowledgment on the part of the two powers, of their mutual right of intervention and guaranty in continental and in maritime affairs.*

The English Government does not seem to have returned any immediate answer to this letter. Indeed, though the form of the proposals contained in it gave it an appearance of great pre-

* From M. Talleyrand to Mr. Fox, June 2.

cision and exactness, some time seems to have been necessary to understand the meaning of the French Government, in making a reference to the preliminary forms in the Administration of Lord Rockingham, and those which preceded the treaty of Amiens; for they were not only dissimilar, but it appears from Mr. Fox's answer, that by adopting the precedents of 1782, the French would have completely established the mode of negotiation to which they objected, and admitted the principle against which M. Talleyrand, in the very letter containing that offer, peremptorily protests. Whether these considerations, or an expectation of further communications from the Russian Cabinet, induced Mr. Fox to suspend the correspondence, no answer was made to this letter, till the 14th of June, by which time a new channel of communication was opened, and a fresh overture was made from the French Government, which led to all the subsequent negotiation between the two countries. As, however, Mr. Fox answered the letter of the 2nd of June without any reference to this new negotiation, it may be right to close our account of the direct correspondence between M. Talleyrand and the English Minister, by stating the substance of the last letter of that correspondence.* It consists of a

* Mr. Fox to M. Talleyrand, June 14.

civil but convincing reply to the objections urged by M. Talleyrand to a joint negotiation, a simple statement of the preliminary discussions in 1782, and a comparison of the situation of England then with relation to the allies of France, with that of France to the allies of Great Britain, at the date of the letter, and an offer of the same forms of treating, which France at that time thought proper to insist upon. "We then treated with France and her allies. Let France now treat with us and our allies." After acquiescing in the basis offered in the second proposition, upon condition that the two powers mutually agree to abstain from all encroachments on the greater or lesser states of Europe; and after expressing his hope, that no difficulties in *form* rather than in *substance* should retard the restoration of peace; he implies, that any mode of negotiation to which Russia will assent, will be agreeable to Great Britain, and takes that opportunity of observing, that an honourable peace was no less conformable to the wishes of Russia, than to those of England and of France.

Thus ended the direct correspondence between the two Ministers for Foreign Affairs; and Mr. Fox had probably strong reasons from his communications with Russia, as he had undoubtedly

from the assurances he had lately * received through Lord Yarmouth, to foresee that the question of joint or separate negotiation would no longer be an obstacle to a more regular and formal discussion of the interests and pretensions of Great Britain and her allies.

In the course of the above-related correspondence, and in consequence of the conciliatory manner in which it had been conducted, Mr. Fox had solicited as a personal favour the release of several of his private acquaintance prisoners at Verdun, the peculiar circumstances of whose detention had rendered any arrangement for their exchange impracticable, as it would have been derogatory to the dignity of the country to have acknowledged the principle on which they had been detained. The applications of Mr. Fox were in many instances successful, and among the persons named by him was the Earl of Yarmouth, only son of the Marquis of Hertford, who together with his wife and family, had been detained in France since the commencement of the war. On Lord Yarmouth's arrival in London, early in June, he communicated the substance of a conversation with M. Talleyrand, which had passed

* Communication from Lord Yarmouth to Mr. Fox, June 13th.

at the desire of that Minister, for the purpose of conveying through a secret and confidential channel, the sentiments and views of France, and the outlines of the terms on which peace might be restored between the two countries. The terms sketched out in the conversation seemed so favourable, that the English Cabinet lost no time in conveying to M. Talleyrand their disposition to commence a negotiation on the basis contained in them. The bearer of the proposition was better able to judge of, and to enforce the adherence to the terms proposed, than any other person whatever; the residence of his family in France rendered Lord Yarmouth's return less liable to publick observation; and it was understood *, that excepting himself, no one would have been permitted to remain twelve hours in France, without producing full powers to negotiate a treaty of peace. These were probably the reasons which induced the English Cabinet to direct Lord Yarmouth to return. Before his departure, Mr. Fox, with an observation that we were all mortal, requested him to commit to writing the heads of the proposals made by M. Talleyrand. His †

* Lord Yarmouth's speech in the House of Commons, Jan. 5. 1807.

† Papers relating to the negotiation with France, No. 12.

memorandum of a conversation with that Minister, preserved in the Secretary of State's office, and afterwards laid before Parliament, is the only written evidence of the proposals which induced Mr. Fox to treat directly for peace with the French Government. As the unwillingness of France to adhere to her original offers not only occasioned the first departure from that spirit of conciliation, in which the former correspondence had been conducted, but was the real cause of the ultimate failure of the negotiation, the substance of those overtures necessarily forms the most important part of the whole transaction. Unfortunately Lord Yarmouth could not foresee the necessity of the disclosure of so confidential a paper. It consequently is not drawn up in that methodical style which is generally desirable in a publick document. The want, however, of official precision, and the omission of some inferior points, were amply supplied by his lordship's comments and explanations in the House of Commons, when the subject came into discussion. From the paper combined with those declarations, it is clear that three specifick offers were held out as inducements to Great Britain to treat viz.,—the restoration of Hanover, the possession of Sicily as a consequence of the principle of the *uti possidetis*, and a facility in the arrangement of the form of treating, which,

without establishing a congress or recognising the claim of a joint negotiation, would not impair the advantages which Great Britain and Russia might derive from their close connection and alliance.

The restoration of Hanover was considered as a point unconnected with the basis of the treaty. It was a compliment to the crown of Great Britain in return for the recognition, virtual or stipulated, of the Emperor of France and of the numerous sovereignties conferred on various branches of his family since the commencement of the war. Bonaparte had in all probability promised the electorate to the King of Prussia, if he had not actually guaranteed the possession of it to that monarch; but, in order to retain the power of amusing the Court of Berlin as long as he might find his interest to do so, he was naturally anxious to conceal this offer of sacrificing her supposed interests to the attainment of peace with Great Britain. Such, indeed, seems to have been his motives in preferring a message through Lord Yarmouth to a continuance of the correspondence between the Ministers of the two countries. The occupation of Hanover by Prussia was in itself a reasonable plea, even to Great Britain, for not committing the offer of its restoration to writing, till further progress had been made towards the conclusion of peace. Many well-informed persons

have, notwithstanding these precautions, attributed the war between France and Prussia to the knowledge acquired by the latter of this overture. The conduct of the Prussian Cabinet, so emphatically termed inconceivable by Bonaparte, is in this instance much too unintelligible for us to unmask. Future historians may obtain documents to which we have no access. It will be for them to determine whether the promoters of the campaign of 1807, in addition to the other instances of their infatuation, had actually the strange pretension of punishing Bonaparte for his sacrifices in favour of peace, and of avenging on France her predilection of the rights of our sovereign at the expense of projects for the aggrandizement of Prussia. The French Emperor must have been more and more aware of the hostility of Prussia in proportion as the negotiation advanced; yet he never showed any wish to conciliate her dispositions or to recede from his offer of restoring Hanover to its lawful sovereign.

On the other points of the negotiation, his conduct was very different. If, on the return of Lord Yarmouth, the outward appearance of conciliation was preserved, the substance of the terms demanded was very unexpectedly altered, and the circumstances of the two countries openly maintained by M. Talleyrand to be materially changed

in favour of France. The fact was, that the French had either ascertained that M. D'Oubril, the Russian Minister, was secretly authorized to treat for a separate peace, or foresaw, with their usual sagacity, that the weakness of his character would enable them to intimidate him into that fatal and inconsiderate measure. M. Talleyrand*, therefore, predicted that the advantages of a joint negotiation were defeated, and openly insisted on that circumstance as a legitimate motive for extending his demands. If this view of the subject was not to be reconciled to high and chivalrous notions of honour, it must be acknowledged to be within the usual line of policy which states prescribe to themselves; and that to have disdained the advantage which France might have derived from this change of circumstances, would have been a rare instance of forbearance among the transactions between nation and nation. The French Government, on the contrary, seem to have been elated with the prospect of success likely to attend their negotiation with M. D'Oubril. They had not determined on the extent of the fresh demands to which this new state of things would, in their judgment, entitle them; and M. Talleyrand, in the first interview with Lord Yarmouth,

* Papers, No. 14.

after his return to Paris, not only departed entirely from his clear and explicit offer of Sicily, but indulged himself in vague allusions to further demands, and in peremptory representations of the necessity of negotiating with some person duly authorized and empowered to treat. This first deviation from the original overtures was received by the British Ministry as the omen of the failure of negotiation. From that period Mr. Fox* is said to have despaired entirely of its success. That great statesman at all periods of his life attached uncommon importance to the preponderance of power in the Mediterranean; and it is probable that the value of the island alone would have rendered him less disposed to surrender Sicily than any European possession over which France had not hitherto acquired a control. But to the honourable mind of Mr. Fox there must have been a yet stronger objection to any cession of that country. Not only had Great Britain no right to cede it without the consent of his Sicilian Majesty, but the Court of Palermo, with all its vices and imperfections, had a claim on the gratitude and justice, as well as on the magnanimity, of Great Britain and Russia. The obligation, indeed, was stronger on the latter power, and it is

* Lord Holland's Speech on the Slave-trade.

true, that at that period the Russian Minister showed little inclination to be bound by it. But the correspondence of Mr. Fox abundantly proves that even the instances of an ally, to whose wishes he was so anxious to defer, would with difficulty have extorted from him any compliance with a measure of so doubtful a character. The value, therefore, of the possession itself, and the claims of the Sicilian Court on the protection of the allies, must have made such a demand on the part of France at any time a material obstacle to the progress of the negotiation. The circumstances in which it was made rendered it yet more discouraging. The English Cabinet considered it not only unreasonable in itself, but as a departure from the principles and basis of the negotiation, a denial of the offers which had been held out to them as inducements to treat, and an indication of the little reliance to be placed in the language or sincerity of the French negotiators. The instructions, therefore, to Lord Yarmouth were distinct and peremptory. He was directed to insist generally on the recurrence to the original overtures, and to make the* re-admission of Sicily as the *sine quâ non* of the production of his full powers, which, "to avoid all pretence of cavil,"

* Papers, No. 15.

were conveyed to him without delay. In the meanwhile, the conduct and language of M. D'Oubril, who had arrived at Paris, and who on the 10th of July opened his negotiations in form with the French Commissioner General Clarke, fully justified the expectations of M. Talleyrand. It was soon manifest that no scruple about Sicily would prevent that Minister from accepting such terms as Bonaparte might choose to grant, and nothing but the immediate and unqualified concurrence of England deter him from signing a separate peace. With the view of postponing so fatal a step, and of securing M. D'Oubril's co-operation on the other points in discussion, the English Cabinet seems for one moment to have been willing* "to ascertain whether any practicable shape could be given to the proposal of an exchange for Sicily." This guarded relaxation was evidently the result of an extreme compliance with the wishes of M. D'Oubril, not a variation of opinion on the importance of the object, much less an acknowledgment of the right of France to recede from the original basis, within the scope of which it is carefully stated to be brought, in Mr. Fox's dispatch of the 18th of July. But the fears and the impatience of M. D'Oubril did not

* Papers, No. 18.

allow him to wait till the sentiments of the British Cabinet were known. Such was the success of the French negotiators, that they intimidated him into a belief that the delay of forty-eight hours in the signature of a separate treaty would expose Germany and Europe to dismemberment and destruction, and that an immediate acquiescence with the demands of Bonaparte was the only method of averting those evils. He accordingly signed a treaty on the 20th of July, and * without communicating to Lord Yarmouth some of the most material articles to which he had consented, hastened, according to his own expression, to lay his work and his head at the feet of his imperial master. The French very naturally regarded the signature of this treaty in † the light of an important victory, and by the same arts as they had practised on M. D'Oubril so far succeeded in terrifying Lord Yarmouth with the consequences of a rupture or of delay, that they prevailed upon him to produce his full powers, before the basis originally offered had been again recognised, before the extension of its application to Sicily had been in any shape renewed, and before the impression produced on the British Cabinet by the

* Papers, No. 26. † Papers, General Clarke, No. 25.

precipitate conduct of M. D'Oubril had been ascertained. General Clarke was immediately appointed to treat with Lord Yarmouth on the part of France; and thus, although "the discussions had, according to Mr. Fox's dispatch of the eighteenth of July*, been prolonged solely for the purpose of temporizing in compliance with the wishes of M. D'Oubril, Lord Yarmouth was actually exchanging notes and holding conferences with a French Commissioner after that gentleman had signed a separate peace and left Paris, and before his Court was apprised of either of those events." The circumstances in which his lordship was placed were undoubtedly very embarrassing, and it is but just to observe, that it would have required great address and experience to have withheld his full powers without bringing the discussions to an abrupt and unsuccessful termination. But as his instructions had been peremptory, it is not any matter of wonder that the English Cabinet was† not satisfied with the step which he had taken. The necessity of some other negotiator "fully instructed in the sentiments of His Majesty's Government on all the various points of discussion that might arise,"‡

* Papers, No. 20. † Papers, No. 26.
‡ Papers, No. 26.

was immediately felt; and the important charge was entrusted to Lord Lauderdale, a nobleman whose discernment and talents eminently qualified him for the task, and whose uniform disposition to a pacifick system of policy was a strong earnest of the sincerity of the British Cabinet in their endeavours to obtain peace. Nor were these the only recommendations of Lord Lauderdale. The health of Mr. Fox began at this period to decline, and the nomination of his personal friend and tried politickal adherent, was a pledge that the Cabinet continued to promote his views, and to consult the spirit of his policy.

The first endeavour of Lord Lauderdale on his arrival at Paris, was to bring back the French Government to the basis of the *uti possidetis*, and to the application of that principle to the island of Sicily. Lord Yarmouth after having for that purpose concurred with his colleague in representing * formally and officially the substance and tendency of Talleyrand's original overtures, left the subsequent part of the negotiation exclusively in his hands. The French negotiators (for M. Champagny, Minister of the Interior, was soon appointed joint plenipotentiary with General Clarke) never actually admitted the basis of the

* Papers, Enclosure E, in No. 35.

uti possidetis, after the arrival of Lord Lauderdale, and constantly evaded the acknowledgment of having in the first instance proposed it. They contrived however, under various pretences, and in one instance by an actual delay of the passports for a messenger, to detain Lord Lauderdale at Paris, till it became the policy of Great Britain, as well as France, to await the decision of the Court of Petersburgh upon the treaty which M. D'Oubril had carried thither for ratification.

On the 3rd of September a courier brought the intelligence to Paris, that the Emperor had refused to ratify M. D'Oubril's treaty, and this refusal was not the consequence of any representation from the Court of London; for it was declared before any messenger arrived from London, or the English Minister in Russia had received any instructions from his Court. M. Talleyrand with * great apparent frankness informed the British negotiator of this piece of intelligence the day after its arrival in Paris, and assured him that France was now disposed to make peace with England on more favourable terms than she otherwise would have been induced to admit. The probability of the ratification of M. D'Oubril's treaty being refused had been foreseen, and Lord Lauderdale was instructed "to † consider the two

* Papers, No. 46. † Papers, No. 41.

Courts as having reverted to their former situation with additional bonds of union, resulting from fresh proofs of their respective adherence to the spirit and principles of their alliance." As it was soon obvious that the abandonment of Russia was to be the price of the more favourable terms so ostentatiously announced to Great Britain, the honourable determination of our Court not to listen to any such projects, prevented any precise detail of the concessions France was willing to make for the attainment of her object. It is, however, worthy of remark, that no offer of Sicily was, even in the supposition of a separate peace, ever made during the course of the negotiation. Mr. Fox was now unable to discharge the duties of his office. The principles, however, which he had laid down, seem to have regulated the conduct of the British Cabinet throughout the discussions. An attention not only to the interests, but to the wishes of Russia, a firm determination to listen to no measure that could give her umbrage or suspicion, and a strong desire to preserve Sicily, amounting nearly to a resolution not to abandon it, were on the part of Great Britain, the most prominent features of the latter, as they had been of the early part of the negotiation. Lord Lauderdale was not authorized "to* sign any

* Papers, Enclosure A, in No. 49.

treaty except provisionally, such treaty not to have its full effect until peace should be concluded between Russia and France;" but he was at the same time instructed, "to impart to the French plenipotentiaries the conditions upon which Russia (according to the full and perfect knowledge his Britannic Majesty had of the intentions of that Court) would be willing to negotiate with the French Government; to reduce them into the form of a treaty in the event of their being agreed to on both sides; and to insert an article in the provisional treaty between Great Britain and France, by which his Britannic Majesty should engage to employ his mediation for the purpose of obtaining the accession of his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias to the said treaty." It should seem that M. Talleyrand felt * little or no objection to the above-described form of proceeding; but notwithstanding the conciliating tone adopted by that Minister, the official note in which the promised acquiescence of the Emperor was signified, breathed a very different spirit. It contained much irrelevant and offensive matter; it was conceived in the language of remonstrance and reproach, and † barely conveyed a reluctant consent

* Papers, No. 49, and No. 50.

† Papers, Enclosure A. in No. 50.

to the proposal of Lord Lauderdale. It is manifest from this circumstance, as well as from other passages of the correspondence, that the impatience of Bonaparte would have brought the negotiation to an abrupt and violent conclusion, but for the frequent and wise interposition of his Ministers, who sometimes by address and sometimes by representation, contrived to soften the tone and moderate the language of their official communications. The English negotiator in * his reply to the above-mentioned paper, though he took as much notice of the offensive topics introduced into it as was essential to the maintenance of his own dignity, very judiciously combined it with the personal assurances of M. Talleyrand, and considered it as amounting to a full admission of his proposal. But on the renewal of the conferences, it did not appear that France was disposed to relax in any one of her pretensions. In the meanwhile Bonaparte had left Paris for the army on the Rhine, and one of the plenipotentiaries (General Clarke), as well as M. Talleyrand, accompanied him on his journey. M. Champagny, who remained to conduct the negotiation, was neither authorized to † relinquish the claims of Joseph upon Sicily, nor to acquiesce in ‡ such an

* Papers, Enclosure B. in No. 50. † Papers, No. 51.
‡ Papers, No. 52.

arrangement as would have satisfied the Court of St. Petersburgh. The negotiation was therefore at an end, and Lord Lauderdale peremptorily insisted on his passports. In the last conference M. Champagny, though he had previously doubted his powers of hearing Lord Lauderdale upon the subject of Russia (notwithstanding the assurances contained in * the publick note and conversations of M. Talleyrand) offered † to cede the full sovereignty of Corfu to that power. This was rejected as insufficient, which has led to the erroneous opinion that the negotiation was broken off solely because Great Britain insisted on the cession of Dalmatia to Russia.

It appears, however, that even if Great Britain, departing from the principles which had guided Mr. Fox in the commencement of the negotiation, had considered her own views of the interest of Russia rather than the wishes of that Court, in a treaty provisionally signed for her approbation, yet it would have been impossible, in the shape in which it was proposed, to acquiesce in the relinquishment of Dalmatia, without incurring the risk of forfeiting the confidence of Russia, and neither accomplishing a general, nor even a se-

* Papers, No. 49, No. 50, and Enclosure A. in No. 50.

† Papers, No. 52.

parate peace after all. Had the English Ministers completed the part of the treaty relating to Russia without securing to that power the object of which she was most desirous, the French, by insisting on stipulations which England considered as utterly inadmissible, but to which Russia was comparatively indifferent, would have thrown upon them the imputation of sacrificing the interests of their ally. This was the more to be apprehended, because on points of that description, especially Sicily, the French had shown no disposition whatever to relax. The consequence would have been, that the strength of the alliance between the two Courts would have been broken. The feeling of a common cause would have been destroyed, and the two powers would have incurred, both in appearance and effect, the disadvantage of contending with France for objects essentially different, and upon distinct and separate grounds. The obvious policy of France, when she despaired of any separate peace with Great Britain, was to induce her to admit in the project of a treaty such terms as she foresaw would alienate the affections and shake the confidence of her ally the Emperor of Russia. The honourable determination of our Cabinet, and the firm but temperate conduct of our negotiator, defeated this design, and his earnest and peremptory de-

mand of passports was at length granted, though they were accompanied with a note* evidently composed under the immediate direction of Bonaparte. This paper insinuates that the principles of Mr. Fox had been abandoned by his colleagues and successors; that a departure from the basis laid down by him had thrown the first obstacle in the way of pacification, and that to the loss of that great man alone was to be ascribed the further continuance of the calamities of war. To these charges Lord Lauderdale delivered a spirited, manly, and convincing reply. Indeed, no impartial person can peruse the early part of the negotiation, without being persuaded that, if the French had conducted themselves towards Mr. Fox as they did towards his successors, the result must have been precisely the same. Whether, if the life of Mr. Fox had been fortunately preserved, confidence in that great character, reliance on the stability and permanence of his power at home, and apprehension of the authority of his name throughout Europe, and in France in particular, might not have induced Bonaparte to relax in his pretensions, and to revert to the councils of moderation which seem to have dictated M. Talleyrand's first correspondence, is mere matter of

* Papers, Enclosure B, in No. 55.

speculation. We have good reason to believe that Mr. Fox himself despaired of any such event, and if our confidence in the weight of his character is greater than his own, it can in no degree affect the merits of his successors and colleagues, who met with no such forbearance or moderation in the councils of the enemy. The charge, "that * the British Government had resolved to forego the prospect of a peace," though probably intended by Bonaparte to inflame the English publick against the Administration, was little calculated to produce that effect. Through the industry of those most hostile to the Ministry, the publick were more prepared to censure the terms of a peace than to lament the continuance of war, and the rupture of a negotiation was the last accusation which a Court party would have thought it prudent, at that time, to urge against the servants of the Crown. The animosity so studiously excited at the commencement of the war, was by no means extinguished in the publick, and an incident soon occurred to show that motives yet more inexcusable contributed to the general sentiment in favour of the rupture of the negotiation. Though the grounds upon which the discussions had been broken off were unknown, the intelligence of Lord

* Papers, Enclosure B, in No. 55.

Lauderdale's departure from Paris was received at Lloyd's Coffee House with bursts of approbation and shouts of applause; a disgusting proof of the indifference with which men can contemplate the calamities of their species, when they conceive that any personal advantage can accrue to themselves from the continuance of them. In this instance the policy was as short sighted as the feeling was contemptible. The capture of Buenos Ayres had raised visions of conquest and of wealth as extravagant as those of El Dorado, and though the Ministers could scarcely have been the dupes of that delusion, they took little pains to undeceive the people. Perhaps a government weakened by the loss of its most efficient member, could hardly be expected, at the moment of breaking off a negotiation for peace, to check a feeling so well calculated to reconcile the publick to that calamity. Though there is no reason to suspect that the infatuation was encouraged by those in power, it was by no means confined to the city of London. It spread through every part of the country, and as it is our duty to record the opinions of our countrymen, as well as the events which gave rise to them, we must with shame acknowledge that the prevalent sentiment of the nation was joy at the prospect of extended commerce and conquest in South America, rather than disap-

pointment at the failure of peace, or grief at the protraction of the horrors of war.

The preliminaries of peace signed at Paris by D'Oubril and refused to be ratified at St. Petersburgh, contained the following articles. Russia gave up to France, Cattaro and all the places occupied by her troops in Dalmatia; in return for which the French Emperor consented, at the request of the Emperor of Russia, to restore Ragusa to its former state, and to abstain from hostilities against the Montenegrins. The Republick of the Seven Islands was declared independent, but the Russians were allowed to station 4000 troops in its territory. The independence of the Ottoman Porte was recognised, and the integrity of its possessions guaranteed by both parties. The French were to evacuate Germany within three months, and the Russians to withdraw all their troops from the Mediterranean, except the corps they were allowed to leave in the Seven Islands. No mention was made of their Sicilian Majesties in the publick treaty, but one of the secret articles is said to have contained a slighting declaration on the part of France, that the Emperor had no objection to the late King of Sicily and his wife finding an asylum wherever they could. There was no stipulation about Sicily; but by another secret article, Majorca.

Minorca, and Ivica, were to be transferred from Spain to the Duke of Calabria, with the title of King of the Balearic Isles, on condition that the ports of these islands should be shut against the English during the continuance of the war. The only article in favour of England, if it could be so called, was an admission on the part of the French Emperor of the good offices of Russia for the attainment of a maritime peace.

When this treaty was brought to St. Petersburgh, it was laid before a council summoned specially for that purpose *; and after comparing it with the instructions given to M. D'Oubril before his departure, and with the subsequent orders sent to him at Vienna, it was declared by the council that M. D'Oubril, in signing these articles, had not only departed from his instructions, but had acted directly contrary to their sense and spirit; and upon this ground his Imperial Majesty was advised to withhold his ratification of the treaty. His resolution to that effect was accordingly signified without delay to the French Government, and notified by a circular letter to all the Russian Ministers at foreign Courts, M. D'Oubril was disgraced and exiled from Court. but neither deprived of his rank nor of his appointments.

* August 25th.

Notwithstanding the declaration of the Russian council, that D'Oubril in signing this treaty had acted in the face of his instructions, the very slight punishment to which he was condemned for conduct so inexcusable if truly represented, leaves some doubt upon the mind, whether he had so far deviated from his secret instructions as to justify the imputations cast upon him. On the other hand, the difficulty of giving any rational explanation of the change of opinion on the subject of peace, which must be supposed to have taken place in the Court of St. Petersburgh after his departure from Vienna, if he negotiated in conformity to secret instructions which were afterwards disavowed, inclines us to believe, that he must have deserved in some degree his disgrace; and his remarkable expression after signing the treaty, "that he would carry to Petersburgh his work and his head, and lay them before the feet of his master," seems to imply, that he was conscious of having incurred a dangerous responsibility, by acting in opposition to his instructions. It has been said, that he was led into this error by a private conversation which he had with the Emperor before his departure from St. Petersburgh, in which he imagined that he discovered a more pacifick spirit and more accommodating policy in his sovereign, than was contained in the publick

instructions of the Ministers; and to this circumstance, if true, may perhaps be imputed the mildness of his punishment. It has been also said, that in addition to the impression made on his weak and pusillanimous character by the menacing language of the French, he was precipitated into the fatal measure of affixing his name to the treaty, by an erroneous opinion, that the new Ministers at St. Petersburgh were less favourably inclined to England than their predecessors. In this idea, however, he was widely mistaken. General Budberg, the successor of Czartorinski, was a man of inferior talents and reputation, but equally attached to the connection of Russia with England, and disposed to make every sacrifice and exertion to maintain the alliance of the two powers.

END OF SECOND VOLUME.

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